

# VICTORIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



## STUDENT HANDBOOK

**2022-2023**

*Information in the 2022-2023 VISD Student Handbook may be  
subject to change and all updates will be posted on the VISD website.*

# VICTORIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

*Message from the Superintendent:*

*Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year! It is my humble honor and privilege to serve as Superintendent of the Victoria Independent School District. The last few years have been remarkable, unforgettable, difficult, transformative, and enjoyable! We have made great strides in advancing the Strategic Plan as we build out pathways for student learning. This has led to more students discovering their genius and finding their “&.”*

*For those who don’t know me, my first job in education was in lawn maintenance and as a custodian. I have been a classroom teacher, an elementary principal, a high school principal, and a district superintendent in multiple states, both in rural and urban settings, and in large and small school organizations. My commitment is to radical transparency and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in everything we do. We strive for unprecedented levels of accessibility to both information and to people.*

*Our daily goal is really quite simple, more students learning more. With ever expanding pathway opportunities, I am excited about the learning available to you and equally excited about our future in VISD!*

*VISD PROUD,*

*Dr. Quintin Shepherd*

*Superintendent of Schools*

## **HANDBOOK-AT-A-GLANCE**

This “Handbook-at-a-Glance” section of the Student Handbook is provided as a quick overview of **SOME** of the topics covered in the full-length document. Please refer to the complete Handbook for specific details and complete information.

## **ATTENDANCE**

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 19 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If a student 19 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student’s enrollment.

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student who is absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction (termed “accelerated instruction” by the state); or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

Any time a child is absent from school for all or a part of the day, the parent or legal guardian must provide a written statement upon the return of the child to class or school that describes the reason for the absence. If a student’s absence exceeds three consecutive days for personal illness, a current statement from a doctor or other licensed health care practitioner is required.

More information may be found in the Compulsory Attendance section.

## **FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES**

The VISD Child Nutrition Department provides freshly prepared meals that are in compliance with state and federal standards. Families that meet income guidelines are eligible for meal cost assistance. Information on qualifying for the Free or Reduced Price Meal Program is available on campuses and on the VISD website.

A pre-paid meal program that allows for the parent to make periodic deposits into a student’s account is available. Also, as a convenience to parents, an on-line system known as Titan Family Portal ([www.Family.TitanK12.com](http://www.Family.TitanK12.com)) is available for making deposits. The Titan Family Portal system is NOT operated by VISD and the district does not receive any compensation from Titan Family Portal. The Titan Family Portal system offers a means for parents to monitor the usage patterns and available balances. Parents may also set up notifications at no charge when their child’s account balance falls to a specified level. Information on meal prices and Titan Family Portal is available in the Handbook Appendix.

## **DRESS CODE**

The dress code sets forth expectations for student appearance on class days. Compliance with the dress code is intended to reduce distractions in the educational environment. A complete copy of the dress code is provided in the Handbook. If the principal determines that a student’s grooming violates the dress code, the student shall be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school or directed to the appropriate resources to comply. If not corrected, the student shall be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day or until the problem is corrected.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

The State of Texas has specific immunization requirements based on the age and grade level of students. All school vaccination rules are in effect regardless of whether the education is received via virtual learning or on campus. Students who have not received the required vaccinations are not allowed to attend class in the Victoria ISD until proper documentation is provided. If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a

U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. Information on obtaining a religion-based waiver is provided in the Handbook. More information on required immunizations is available on page 46 in the Handbook, in medical offices, and on the VISD website.

## **PARENT GRADEBOOK**

A key component of parental involvement is having accurate, up-to-date information. Through a program called the Home Access Center, parents and students may monitor their child's progress, grades and attendance. Parents are strongly encouraged to establish accounts for their child. Step-by-step instructions for creating an account are provided in the Handbook's appendix. A mobile app is also available by utilizing a QR code found on the instruction page or by searching for "eSchoolPLUS Family." There is no charge for the online or mobile app service.

## **RELEASE OF INFORMATION RELATED TO STUDENTS**

Certain data about students has been determined to be "directory information." This information is made available to members of the public who request it or can be released by the district in matters related to school, including, but not limited to news releases, honor roll, school yearbooks, and photos of school events. This directory information includes the student's name, grade, school, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, enrollment status, honors received in school, major fields of study, participation in school activities and sports, the district-supplied e-mail address, dates of attendance, and the weight and height of students in athletic events.

In addition, the district may release directory information to military recruiters and to institutions of higher education such as colleges and universities. Parents may place restrictions on the release of this information. Parents may designate if they wish information regarding their child to be withheld for non-school related purposes, for school related purposes, and/or from military recruiters or institutions of higher education. Parents must officially opt out of the disclosure of such information during the online registration process. Please note that parents who opt out of disclosing directory information for "school-related" purposes are opting out of the release of their child's name for honors including the Honor Roll and school news releases.

## **RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY & USE OF CELL PHONES**

Technology is a valuable tool in the educational environment, but the district sets high expectations on how, when and why technology is used in the school. Students are expected to follow all guidelines for the acceptable use of technology. Violations of those guidelines may result in disciplinary action and could result in forfeiture of the privilege of access to district-owned technology.

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones. However, students shall not use a telecommunication device, including a cellular telephone, or other electronic device in violation of district and campus rules. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers. These telecommunication devices must remain turned off during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. For more information, refer to Electronic Devices and Technology Resources section.

## **STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

The district makes available through a third-party vendor low-cost accident insurance options for student coverage at school and for coverage around the clock. Information on the accident insurance options is available through school offices and on the VISD website.

Under state law, the district cannot pay for medical expenses associated with a student's injury.

## **STUDENT SAFETY, BULLYING, HARASSMENT**

Everyone has the right to feel physically and emotionally safe at school. Students may be expected to take an active role in maintaining a safe and sanitary learning space on a routine basis. Victoria ISD has a strong policy prohibiting bullying, harassment and all other forms of behavior that would reduce the feelings of safety for any student in school. Any student who witnesses an act of alleged bullying or other prohibited behavior or any student who is the victim of such behaviors should immediately report the incident to the principal, assistant principal or other adult on the campus. Parents and students may also make reports by completing the Incident Reporting Form found at: [VISD Bullying/Incident Reporting Form](#)

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE TESTING**

In an effort to reinforce and develop positive behaviors and habits, students at the secondary level may participate in testing that detects the use of prohibited substances. For students who participate in extracurricular activities or who wish to drive and park vehicles on school property, consent to participate in the random testing is mandatory. Parents of other students in grades 7-12 may voluntarily place their child in the database from which students are randomly selected for testing.

## **TEXTBOOKS, OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Textbooks and other instructional materials are provided to students at no charge in support of their learning. It is important to stress responsibility and proper care and maintenance of textbooks and supplemental materials. A parent is responsible for any textbook not returned by the student. A student who fails to return all textbooks forfeits the right to free textbooks until each textbook previously issued but not returned, or returned in a damaged condition, is paid for by the parent, student or guardian. Understandably, normal wear is expected to occur, however, materials damaged beyond what would be considered normal usage will result in a fine being assessed to cover the cost of the damage.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

VISD offers transportation services to and from school for qualifying students. We request that all parents register their school bus eligible students for transportation prior to the start of school for accurate busing information. Transportation services are also provided for students who travel between educational sites during the school day and on field and extracurricular trips. Students are expected to abide by safety and conduct rules on and around school buses and other school transportation modes. Students who violate those expectations face disciplinary action which could ultimately result in the revocation of bus ridership privileges and other consequences.



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## PREFACE

The Victoria Independent School District Student Handbook is designed to provide basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. The handbook is divided into two sections:

**Section I – PARENTAL RIGHTS** – will help you respond to school-related issues regarding curriculum and the school environment. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

**Section II – OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS** – organized alphabetically by topic, and, where possible, further divided by applicability to ages and/or grade levels, for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “parent,” unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, any person granted some other type of lawful control of the student, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware that it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance.

Both students and parents should also become familiar with the Victoria Independent School District Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found on the district’s website at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net) and is available in hard copy upon request.

In case of conflict between board policy (including the Student Code of Conduct) and any provisions of the Student Handbook, the provisions of board policy and the Student Code of Conduct are to be followed.

Please be aware that the Student Handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed board policy changes by attending board meetings. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters or other communications. The district reserves the right to modify provisions of the Student Handbook at any time, whenever it is deemed necessary. Notice of any revision or modification will be given as is reasonably practical under the circumstances.

Although the Student Handbook may refer to rights established through law or district policy, the Student Handbook does not create any additional rights for students and parents. It does not, nor is it intended to, create contractual or legal rights between any student or parent and the district.

If, at any time, the district offers remote learning instruction, all district policies, procedures, guidelines, rules, and other expectations of student behavior will be enforced as applicable in a remote or virtual learning environment.

References to policy codes are included to allow for reference to current Board policy. The District’s Official Policy Manual is available for review in the District Administration Building. An on-line version is available at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net). If you or your child have questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact the principal. If you have difficulty accessing the handbook because of a disability, please contact the Office of Student Services for assistance at 361.788.9250.



## SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS

This section of the Victoria ISD Student Handbook includes several notices that the district is required to provide to you, as well as other information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

### STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination and as required by law, Victoria ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing education services, activities, and programs, including CTE programs, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment:

Dawn Maroney, Director of Student Services  
102 Profit Drive Victoria, TX 77901 361-788-9250

ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:

Kelli Cotton, Director of Special Services  
102 Profit Drive Victoria, TX 77901 361-788-9242

All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the Superintendent

Dr. Quintin Shepherd, Superintendent of Schools  
102 Profit Drive Victoria, TX 77901 361-788-9202

[See policies FB, FFH, and GKD]

### CONSENT, OPT-OUT, AND REFUSAL RIGHTS

#### Consent to Conduct a Psychological Evaluation

Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent.

**Note:** An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

#### Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction *Annual Notification*

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

In accordance with state law, below is a summary of the district's curriculum regarding human sexuality instruction:

- At this time, human sexuality instruction is part of the overall health instruction class required by the VISD graduation plan. The curriculum for this instruction is located in the district-approved textbook for the health course. For further information, contact your campus or see the district's curriculum webpage at <https://www.visd.net/page/curriculum-instruction-and-accountability>

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials.

- Remove his or her child from any part of the human sexuality instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. FNG(LOCAL)

State law also requires that instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS):

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- Emphasize that abstinence, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- Direct adolescents to abstain from sexual activity before marriage as the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

### **Consent Before Human Sexuality Instruction**

Before a student receives human sexuality instruction, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

### **Consent Before Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**

Before a student receives instruction on the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence and sex trafficking, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

### **Annual Notification**

Students in middle school and high school receive instruction related to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

Victoria ISD utilized the Goodheart-Wilcox Texas Health Skills for High Schools textbook. This state approved textbook contains a companion resource so that students do not have access to any opt-in content or topics.

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials. As required by law, any curriculum materials in the public domain used in this instruction will be posted on the district's website at the location indicated above.
- Remove his or her child from any part of this instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.

- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. (See the campus principal for details.)
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. See Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels) and FNG for information on the grievance and appeals process.

### **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service**

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student or conduct a medical screening of a student as part of the district's intervention procedures except as permitted by law.

The district has established procedures for recommending to a parent an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns, substance abuse, or suicide risk. The district's mental health liaison will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and provide information about available counseling options.

The district has also established procedures for staff to notify the mental health liaison regarding a student who may need intervention.

The mental health liaison can be reached at:

Brandi Henke, Director of Counseling, (361) 788-2891, [brandi.henke@visd.net](mailto:brandi.henke@visd.net)

Students in Special Education should contact Jolene Barrientos, Lead LSSP, (361) 788-9242, [jolene.barrientos@visd.net](mailto:jolene.barrientos@visd.net)

The mental health liaison can provide further information regarding these procedures as well as curriculum materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on and off campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

### **Consent to Display a Student's Original Works and Personal Information**

Teachers may display students' work, which may include personally identifiable student information, in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement.

However, the district will seek parental consent before displaying students' artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students, original videos or voice recordings, and other original works on the district's website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the district, such as a campus or classroom website, and in district publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

### **Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction if Student is Under Age 14**

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's [Parenting and Paternity Awareness Program](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum) (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum>); otherwise, the student will not be allowed to participate in the instruction. This program, developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE), is incorporated into the district's health education classes.

### **Consent to Video or Audio Record a Student When Not Otherwise Permitted by Law**

State law permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission when it:

- Is to be used for school safety,
- Relates to classroom instruction or a cocurricular or extracurricular activity,
- Relates to media coverage of the school, or
- Relates to the promotion of student safety as provided by law for a student receiving special education services in certain settings.

In other circumstances, the district will seek written parental consent before making a video or voice recording of a student.

Please note that parents and visitors to a classroom, both virtual and in person, may not record video or audio or take photographs or other still images without permission from the teacher or other school official.

### **Prohibiting the Use of Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment – spanking or paddling the student – may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and district policy FO(LOCAL).

If you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child as a method of student discipline, submit a written statement to the campus principal stating this decision. The district may not administer corporal punishment if a student's parent submits a signed, written statement prohibiting its use. A signed statement must be provided each year if you do not want corporal punishment to be administered to your child. You may choose to revoke this prohibition at any time during the year by providing a signed statement to the campus principal.

Note: District personnel may use discipline methods other than corporal punishment if the parent requests that corporal punishment not be used. If the district is made aware that a student is in temporary or permanent conservatorship (custody) of the state, through foster care, kinship care, or other arrangements, corporal punishment will not be administered, even when a signed statement prohibiting its use has not been submitted by the student's caregiver or caseworker.

### **Limiting Electronic Communications between Students and District Employees**

Teachers and other approved employees are permitted by the district to use electronic communication with students within the scope of the individual's professional responsibilities, as described by district guidelines. For example, a teacher may set up a social networking page for his or her class that has information related to class work, homework, and tests. As a parent, you are welcome to join or become a member of such a page. However, text messages sent to an individual student are only allowed if a district employee with responsibility for an extracurricular activity needs to communicate with a student participating in the extracurricular activity. The employee is required to include his or her immediate supervisor and the student's parent as recipients on all text messages. The employee is also required to send a copy of the text message to the employee's district email address.

If you prefer that your child not receive any one-to-one electronic communications from a district employee or if you have questions related to the use of electronic media by district employees, please contact the campus principal.

### **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, permits the district to disclose appropriately designated "directory information" from a student's education records without written consent. "Directory information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Examples include:

- A student's photograph (for publication in the school yearbook);
- A student's name and grade level (for communicating class and teacher assignments);
- The name, weight, and height of an athlete (for publication in a school athletic program);
- A list of student birthdays (for generating school-wide or classroom recognition);
- A student's name and photograph (posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform); and
- The names and grade levels of students submitted by the district to a local newspaper or other community publication (to recognize the A/B honor roll for a specific grading period).

This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. However, a parent or eligible student may object to the release of a student's directory information. This objection must be made within ten school days of your child's first day of instruction for this school year either in writing to the principal or during the online registration process.

The district requests that families living in a shelter for survivors of family violence or trafficking notify district personnel that the student currently resides in such a shelter. Families may want to opt out of the release of directory information so that the district does not release any information that might reveal the location of such a shelter.

As allowed by state law, the district has identified two directory information lists – one for school-sponsored purposes and the second for all other requests. For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use information that has been designated as directory information: student name; address; telephone listing; e-mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; honors and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams, and enrollment status (active/inactive). If the parent does not object to the use of the child's information for these school-sponsored purposes, the school will not ask permission each time the district wants to use the information for these purposes. This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at Directory Information.

Please keep in mind that the district often needs to use student information for the following school-sponsored purposes, including but not limited to:

- Honor roll
- School photographs and the annual/yearbook
- School newspapers and newsletters
- News releases and web releases related to student accomplishments, events, and programs
- Student's name and photograph posted on a district-approved and -managed social media platform
- Athletic programs

## **Objecting to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**

Unless a parent has advised the district not to release his or her student's information, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the district to comply with requests from military recruiters or institutions of higher education for the student's: Name, Address, and Telephone listing.

Military recruiters may also have access to a student's district-provided email address, unless a parent has advised the district not to release this information.

To change selection made during registration to the **Parent's Objection to the Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**, contact campus office.

## **Participation in Third-Party Surveys**

### ***Consent Required Before Student Participation in a Federally Funded Survey***

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) provides parents with certain rights regarding participation in surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

A parent has the right to consent before a student is required to submit to a survey funded by the U.S. Department of Education that concerns any of the following protected areas:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent; or
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student's eligibility for a program.

A parent may inspect the survey or other instrument and any corresponding instructional materials used in connection with such a survey. [See policy EF(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **"Opting Out" of Participation in Other Types of Surveys or Screenings and the Disclosure of Personal Information**

The PPRA gives parents the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from the child for the purpose of marketing, selling, or otherwise disclosing that information to others.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student.

Exceptions are hearing, vision, spinal screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under state law. [See policies EF and FFAA for more information.]

A parent may inspect:

- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and



- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

The ED provides extensive information about the [Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment](#), including a [PPRA Complaint Form](#).

## **REMOVING A STUDENT FROM INSTRUCTION OR EXCUSING A STUDENT FROM A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTION**

**See section on Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction and Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking for information on a parent's right to remove a student from such instruction.**

### **Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence in Grades 3–12**

State law designates the week of September 17 as Celebrate Freedom Week and requires all social studies classes provide:

- Instruction concerning the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, and
- A specific recitation from the Declaration of Independence for students in grades 3–12.

Per state law, a student may be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence if:

- A parent provides a written statement requesting that his or her child be excused,
- The district determines that the student has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or
- A parent is a representative of a foreign government to whom the U.S. government extends diplomatic immunity.

[See policy EHBK(LEGAL)]

### **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participating in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. [See **Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence** and policy EC(LEGAL)]

### **Religious or Moral Beliefs**

As a parent, you may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs.

The removal may not be used for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. The student must also satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by state law. [See policy EMB(LEGAL)]

### **Tutoring or Test Preparation**

A teacher may determine that a student needs additional targeted assistance for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills based on:

- Informal observations,
- Evaluative data such as grades earned on assignments or tests, or
- Results from diagnostic assessments.

The school will always attempt to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible.

In accordance with state law and policy EC, districts must obtain parental permission before removing a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the days the class is offered.

Under state law, students with grades below 70 for a reporting period are required to attend tutorial services—if the district offers these services.

[For questions about school-provided tutoring programs, contact the student's teacher and see policies EC and EHBC. See **Standardized Testing** for information regarding required accelerated instruction after a student fails to perform satisfactorily on certain state-mandated tests.]

## **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS, CURRICULUM MATERIALS, AND DISTRICT RECORDS/POLICIES**

### **Instructional Materials**

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered, whether instruction is delivered in-person, virtually, or remotely. The district will provide login credentials to each student's parent for any learning management system or online learning portal used in instruction to facilitate parent access and review.

You are also entitled to request that the school allow your child to take home any instructional materials used by the student. If the school determines that sufficient availability exists to grant the request, the student must return the materials at the beginning of the next school day if requested to do so by the student's teacher. A school must provide printed versions of electronic instructional materials to a student if the student does not have reliable access to technology at home.

### **Notices of Certain Student Misconduct to Noncustodial Parent**

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to his or her child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See policy FO(LEGAL) and the Student Code of Conduct]

### **Participation in Federally Required, State-Mandated, and District Assessments**

In accordance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a parent may request information regarding any state or district policy related to your child's participation in assessments required by federal law, state law, or the district.

### **Student Records**

#### ***Accessing Student Records***

A parent may review his or her child's records. These records include:

- Attendance records,
- Test scores,
- Grades,
- Disciplinary records,
- Counseling records,
- Psychological records,
- Applications for admission,
- Health and immunization information,
- Other medical records,



- Teacher and school counselor evaluations,
- Reports of behavioral patterns,
- Records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with your child, as the term intervention strategy is defined by law,
- State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child, and
- Teaching materials and tests used in your child's classroom.

### ***Authorized Inspection and Use of Student Records***

A federal law, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to student education records. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is age 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education. These rights, as discussed in this section as well as at **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** are:

- The right to inspect and review student records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.
- The right to request an amendment to a student record the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of FERPA.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent, and
- File a complaint (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>) with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

Both FERPA and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student, requesting the information. Virtually all information pertaining to student performance—including grades, test results, and disciplinary records—is considered confidential educational records.

Inspection and release of student records is restricted to an eligible student or a student's parent unless the school receives a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student's education records. A parent's rights regarding access to student records are not affected by the parent's marital status.

Federal law requires that control of the records goes to the student as soon as the student:

- reaches the age of 18,
- is emancipated by a court, or
- enrolls in a postsecondary institution.

However, the parents may continue to have access to the records if the student is a dependent for tax purposes and under limited circumstances when there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without written consent of the parent or eligible student, in the following circumstances:

- When district school officials have what federal law refers to as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. School officials would include:
  - Board members and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals;
  - Teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff (including district health or district medical staff);

- A person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular institutional service or function (such as an attorney, consultant, third-party vendor that offers online programs or software, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, school resource officer, or volunteer);
- A person appointed to serve on a school committee to support the district's safe and supportive school program;
- A parent or student serving on a school committee; or
- A parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties.

"Legitimate educational interest" in a student's records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility to the school and the student; or investigating or evaluating programs.

- To authorized representatives of various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers, the U.S. Comptroller General's office, the U.S. Attorney General's office, the U.S. Secretary of Education, TEA, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture's office, and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- To individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- To another school, school district/system, or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which a student has applied or which the student has received.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; administer student aid programs; or improve instruction.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- When the district discloses information that has been designated as directory information.  
[see **Objecting to the Release of Directory Information** for opportunities to prohibit this disclosure]

Release of personally identifiable information to any other person or agency – such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application - will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The campus principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. Physical address and contact information for each campus is included in the handbook. The District Archives located at the Superintendent's Office is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated is located at 102 Profit Drive, Victoria TX 77901.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying costs of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The address of the Superintendent's Office is 102 Profit Drive, Victoria TX 77901. The principal's office is located at the school. A listing of all schools and addresses is provided at the back of this handbook.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction or amendment if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the appropriate records custodian. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record.

Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course or on an examination is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if the board of trustees determines that the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district's grading policy.

[See FINALITY OF GRADES at FNG(LEGAL), **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** and **Complaints and Concerns** for an overview of the process]

The district's policy regarding student records found at policy FL is available from the principal's or superintendent's office and on the district's Web site at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net).

NOTE: The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records - such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher – do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

### **Teacher and Staff Professional Qualifications**

A parent may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and whether the teacher is currently teaching in the field of discipline of his or her certification. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

### **Title 1, Part A Schoolwide Program**

Title 1, Part A campuses have their Campus Improvement Plans available to the LEA and public on each campus website under the "About Us" tab. Each campus also has a hard copy available in their front offices in their Title 1, Part A Parent & Family Binder. The Campus Improvement Plan is provided in both English and Spanish for all campuses (see Language Access Plan).

## **STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **Children of Military Families**

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children entitles children of military families to flexibility regarding certain district and state requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements;
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities;
- Enrollment in the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN); and
- Graduation requirements

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the district. The district will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent's return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at: <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=7995>  
Military Family Resources at the Texas Education Agency.

## **Multiple Birth Siblings**

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children.

[See policy FDB(LEGAL)]

## **Safety Transfers/Assignments**

As a parent, you may:

- Request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the district to have been a victim of bullying, which includes cyberbullying, as defined by Education Code 37.0832. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. Contact the Office of Student Services at 361-788-9250 for information.
- Consult with district administrators if your child has been determined by the district to have engaged in bullying and the board decides to transfer your child to another classroom or campus. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. [See **Bullying** and policies FDB and FFI]
- Request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDE]
- Request the transfer of your child to another campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether the assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. If the victim does not wish to transfer, the district will transfer the assailant in accordance with policy FDE.

## **Student Use of a Service/Assistance Animal**

A parent of a student who uses a service/assistance animal because of the student's disability must submit a request in writing to the Principal before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. The district will try to accommodate a request as soon as possible but will do so within ten district business days.

## **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)**

A student in the conservatorship (custody) of the state who enrolls in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year.

The district will assess the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district.

The district will award partial course credit when the student only passes one half of a two-half course. [For provisions on partial course credit for students who are not in the conservatorship of the state, see EI(LOCAL).]

A student in the conservatorship of the state who is moved outside the district's or school's attendance boundaries—or who is initially placed in the conservatorship of the state and moved outside the district's or school's boundaries—is entitled to remain at the school the student was attending prior to the placement or move until the student reaches the highest grade level at that particular school.

If a student in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, the student can request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets its graduation criteria.

For a student in the conservatorship of the state who is eligible for a tuition and fee exemption under state law and likely to be in care on the day preceding the student's 18th birthday, the district will upon request by the student or legal guardian:

- Assist the student with the completion of applications for admission or financial aid;
- Arrange and accompany the student on campus visits;
- Assist in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships;
- Identify whether the student is a candidate for appointment to a military academy;
- Assist the student in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including (subject to the availability of funds) arranging for the payment of examination fees by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS); and
- Coordinate contact between the student and a liaison officer for students formerly in the conservatorship of the state.

[See also **Credit by Exam** and **Students in Foster Care** for more information]

### **A Student Who Is Homeless**

A student who is homeless will be provided flexibility regarding certain district provisions, including:

- Proof of residency requirements;
- Immunization requirements;
- Educational program placement (if the student is unable to provide previous academic records or misses an application deadline during a period of homelessness);
- Credit-by-examination opportunities at any point during the year (if the student enrolled in the district after the beginning of the school year), per State Board of Education (SBOE) rules;
- Assessment of the student's available records to determine transfer of credit for subjects and courses taken before the student's enrollment in the district;
- Awarding partial credit when a student passes only one half of a two-half course;
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities; and
- Graduation requirements.

Federal law allows a student who is homeless to remain enrolled in the "school of origin" or to enroll in a new school in the attendance area where the student is currently residing.

If a student who is homeless in grade 11 or 12 transfers to another district but does not meet the graduation requirements of the receiving district, state law allows the student to request a diploma from the previous district if the student meets the criteria to graduate from the previous district.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied by the district's eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). The district will expedite local timelines, when possible, for prompt dispute resolution.

[See **Credit by Examination for Advancement/Acceleration**, **Course Credit**, and **Students who are Homeless**]

### **A Student Who Has Learning Difficulties or Who Needs Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact their child's classroom teacher, campus administrator or guidance counselor to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services.

RtI links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine whether the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### ***Special Education Referrals***

If a parent makes a **written request** for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special services or to a district administrative employee of the school district, the district must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the district agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

**Note:** A request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally; it does not need to be made in writing. Districts must still comply with all federal prior-written notices and procedural safeguard requirements as well as the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district to respond within the 15 school-day timeline.

If the district decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If the district receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30 due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost. Additional information regarding special education is available from the school district in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

### ***Contact Person for Special Education Referrals***

Regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services AND for questions regarding post-secondary transitions, including the transition from education to employment, for students receiving special education services, contact the district's transition and employment designee: Office of Special Services, Kelli Cotton, Director of Special Services at 361-788-9242.

### ***Section 504 Referrals***

Each school district must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's Section 504 program. Districts must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes:

- notice,



- an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records,
- an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and
- a review procedure.

### ***Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals***

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is primarily the Campus 504 Coordinator (call the campus for more information). If further assistance is needed, contact the Director of Special Services at 361-788-9242. [See also **Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**]

Visit these websites for information regarding students with disabilities and the family:

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

### ***Notification to Parent of Intervention Strategies for Learning Difficulties Provided to Student in General Education***

In accordance with state law, the district will annually notify parents if their child receives assistance for learning difficulties. Details of such assistance can include intervention strategies. This notice is not intended for those students already enrolled in a special education program.

### ***Students Who Receive Special Education Services with Other School-Aged Children in the Home***

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, state law permits the parent or guardian to request that other students residing in the household be transferred to the same campus—if the grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus.

The student receiving special education services would be entitled to transportation; however, the district is not required to provide transportation to other children in the household.

The parent or guardian should contact the school principal regarding transportation needs prior to requesting a transfer for other children in the home. [See policy FDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

### ***Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English***

A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English.

If the student qualifies for these services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

### ***Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected Under Section 504***

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law—and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services—may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

Before students identified as 504 can take the SAT, PSAT/NMSQT, ACT or Advanced Placement Exams with accommodations – such as extended time or the use of a computer—the request for accommodations must be approved by the College Board’s Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office which can take about seven weeks since the College Board uses a documentation review process. Therefore, the student and/or parent should contact the Campus 504 Coordinator as early as possible for assistance with completing the appropriate forms needed by the College Board for this type of request.

## **SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Topics in this section of the Student Handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment with your child to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you or your child has a question about a specific school-related issue. Where possible, the topics are also organized to alert you to the applicability of each topic based on a student’s age or grade level. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact your school office. Telephone numbers have been provided at the back of this handbook.

### **ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education – to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day’s learning on the previous day’s, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws – one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a student’s attendance affects the award of a student’s final grade or course credit – are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

#### **Compulsory Attendance**

##### ***Prekindergarten and Kindergarten***

Students enrolled in prekindergarten and kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

##### ***Ages 6–18***

State law requires that a student who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached their 19th birthday, shall attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended-year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

State law requires a student in kindergarten–grade 2 to attend any assigned accelerated reading instruction program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program based on a diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program before or after school or during the summer if the student does not meet the passing standards on an applicable subject area state assessment.



## ***Age 19 and Older***

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 19th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If the student incurs more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA for more information.]

## **Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions**

### ***All Grade Levels***

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for the following activities and events, as long as the student makes up all the work:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining U.S. citizenship;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services, if the student returns to school on the same day of the appointment and brings a note from the health-care provider;
- Absences resulting from a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, with certification by a physician;
- For students in the conservatorship of the state,
- An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or
- Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student's participation in the activity outside of school hours.
- For children of military families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian going to, on leave from, or returning from, certain deployments. [See Children of Military Families]

Note that documented health-care appointments may include telehealth appointments. Students who are physically on campus will not be allowed to participate in telehealth or other online appointments without specific authorization from an appropriate administrator. Students should not use district-issued technology, including Wi-Fi or internet, for telehealth appointments because use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district. For more information, see Telecommunication and Other Electronic Devices

### ***Secondary Grade Levels***

The district will allow a student who is 15 years of age or older to be absent for one day to obtain a learner license and one day to obtain a driver's license, provided that the board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL). The student will be required to provide documentation of his or her visit to the driver's license office for each absence and must make up any work missed. [See **Driver License Attendance Verification.**]

Victoria ISD District of Innovation Plan will broaden its college and career readiness emphasis by allowing students in grades 9-12 to visit colleges, trade schools, or universities of interest. Students will still be required to submit verification of such visits in accordance with administrative regulations. Victoria ISD will waive the two-day excused absences limit per year and adopt a policy allowing seniors to miss 4 days per year, juniors to miss 3 days per year, sophomores to miss 2 days per year and freshman to miss 1 day per year to visit colleges, trade schools, or universities of interest.

- The board has authorized such excused absences under policy FEA(LOCAL);

- The principal has approved the student's absence; and
- The student follows campus procedures to verify the visit and makes up any work missed.

Victoria ISD District of Innovation Plan waives the four-day total limit on students seeking to pursue enlistment in a branch of the armed services of the United States or the Texas National Guard. A newly adopted policy will allow classified juniors and seniors meeting the 17-year-old age requirement, four excused absences per year to pursue interest in the military. Students will still be required to submit verification of such visits in accordance with administrative regulations.

The district will allow a student to be absent for up to two days per school year to serve as:

- An early voting clerk, provided the district's board has authorized this in policy FEA(LOCAL), the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the principal prior to the absences; or
- An election clerk, if the student makes up any work missed.

The district will allow a student in grades 6–12 to be absent for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran.

### **Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance**

School employees must investigate and report violations of the compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school, any class, any required special program, or any required tutorial will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

If a student with a disability is experiencing attendance issues, the student's ARD committee or Section 504 committee will be notified, and the committee will determine whether the attendance issues warrant an evaluation, a reevaluation, and/or modifications to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan, as appropriate.

### ***Between Ages 6 and 18***

When a student between ages 6 and 18 incurs unexcused absences for three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, the school will send a notice to the student's parent, as required by law, to remind the parent that it is the parent's duty to monitor the student's attendance and to require the student to come to school. The notice will also inform the parent that the district will initiate truancy prevention measures and request a conference between school administrators and the parent. These measures will include a behavior improvement plan, school-based community service, or referrals to either in-school or out-of-school counseling or other social services. Any other measures considered appropriate by the district will also be initiated.

Each campus has an Attendance Clerk or Student Success Facilitator who can answer questions about student absences and the effect of those absences from school. Questions or concerns may also be addressed by a campus administrator. The Attendance Clerk or Student Success Facilitator, in conjunction with the District Truancy Prevention Coordinator, monitors student attendance and develops intervention plans as needed. Contact your campus or The District Truancy Prevention Coordinator, Becca Garcia, at [rebecca.garcia@visd.net](mailto:rebecca.garcia@visd.net) for further truancy prevention.

A court of law may also impose penalties against a student's parent if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, and the parent is subject to prosecution for parent contributing to non-attendance.

If a student, ages 12–18, incurs unexcused absences on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, the district, in most circumstances, will refer the student to truancy court for truant conduct. [See policy FEA(LEGAL)]

### ***Age 19 and Older***

After a student, age 19 or older, incurs a third unexcused absence, the district will send the student a letter as required by law explaining that the district may revoke the student's enrollment for the remainder of the school year if the student has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking a student's enrollment, the district may implement a behavior improvement plan.

### **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student must attend the class at least 90 percent of the days it is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days may receive credit or a final grade if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal, that allows the student to fulfill the class's instructional requirements. If a student is involved in a criminal or juvenile court proceeding, the judge presiding over the case must also approve the plan before the student receives credit or a final grade.

If a student attends fewer than 75 percent of the class days or does not complete the principal-approved plan, then the attendance review committee will determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade. [See policy FEC for more information.]

With the exception of absences due to serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment, all absences, whether excused or unexcused, may be considered in determining whether a student has met attendance requirements. The attendance committee shall consider whether a student has mastered the essential knowledge and skills and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.

The attendance committee shall consider the student's unique circumstances and, if necessary, shall impose conditions for awarding credit or a final grade that permit the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class rather than assigning a student to attend a specified program for an amount of time equivalent to the student's absences. Conditions may include:

- Maintaining attendance standards for the rest of the semester.
- Completing additional assignments, as specified by the committee or teacher.
- Attending tutorial sessions as scheduled.
- Completing other instructional programs, as specified by the committee.
- Taking an examination to earn credit. [See EHDB]

In all cases, the student must earn a passing grade in order to receive credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board by following policy FNG(LOCAL).

### **Official Attendance-Taking Time**

The District must submit attendance of its students to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) reflecting attendance at a specific time each day. Official attendance is taken every day at a time approved by the Board of Trustees. The official time varies by the grade level of the school and its programs. Elementary schools' official daily attendance time is 9:30 a.m., middle schools' official daily attendance time is 10:30

a.m., and high schools' official daily attendance time is 9:20 a.m. (with flex time for certain student schedules at 1:30 p.m.). The VISD Success Academy and the Primary/Secondary DAEP Campuses will use an official attendance time daily of 9:20 a.m.

A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation for the absence.

### **Documentation after an Absence**

When a student is absent from school, the student – upon arrival or return to school – must bring a note signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is age 18 or older or is an emancipated minor under state law.

The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the district to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the district is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

### ***Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness***

The principal or attendance committee may require verification from a health-care provider in accordance with administrative regulations as a condition of classifying an absence for personal illness as one for which there are extenuating circumstances. [See FEC]

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school, in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.

### ***Certification of Absence Due to Severe Illness or Treatment***

If a student is absent because of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes a student's attendance infeasible, a parent must provide certification from a physician licensed to practice in Texas specifying the student's illness and the anticipated period of absence related to the illness or treatment.

### ***Driver License Attendance Verification***

A currently enrolled student seeking a driver's license shall submit the Texas Department of Public Safety Verification of Enrollment and Attendance Form (VOE), signed by the parent, to the campus central office at least 10 days before it is needed. The district will issue a VOE only if the student meets class credit or attendance requirements. The VOE form is available at:

<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/driver/forms/VOE.pdf>.

Further information may be found on the Texas Department of Public Safety website:

<https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/driver-license>.

To qualify for a signed VOE form from the school administrator or designee, the student must be currently enrolled AND have earned credit for each class the semester prior to determining VOE eligibility. If the student was not awarded credit for each class the semester prior to application for the VOE, the school should examine attendance records for the semester prior to application for the VOE and determine whether the student was present 90% of the time each class was offered. If so, the VOE may be issued. If the student did not receive credit and did not attend 90% of their classes, the student is not eligible for a VOE unless the school attendance committee and/or administration approved a plan establishing conditions for the student to meet in order to receive a VOE.

See Compulsory Attendance—Exemptions for Secondary Grade Levels for information on excused absences for obtaining a learner license or driver's license.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY UNDER STATE AND FEDERAL LAW**

Victoria ISD and each of its campuses are held to certain standards of accountability under state and federal law. A key component of the accountability requirements is the dissemination and publication of certain reports and information, which include:

- The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the district, compiled by TEA, the state agency that oversees public education, based on academic factors and ratings;
- A School Report Card (SRC) for each campus in the district compiled by TEA based on academic factors and ratings; it will be interesting to see what TASB's changes are for this; printed SRCs are on their way out and parents are going to be expected to retrieve them online
- The district's financial management report, which will include the financial accountability rating assigned to the district by TEA;
- Information compiled by TEA for the submission of a federal report card that is required by federal law.

This information can be found on the district's website at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net). Hard copies of any reports are available upon request at the district's administration office.

TEA maintains additional accountability and accreditation information at [TEA Performance Reporting Division](#).

## **ARMED SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY TEST**

A student in grades 10–12 will be offered an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test and consult with a military recruiter. The test date, time and location can be secured by contacting the principal or counselor.

## **AWARDS AND HONORS**

Awards should be an integral part of student success in providing recognition for student achievement. Students may be recognized for all "A" honor roll, all "A" and "B" honor roll each nine weeks. Additionally, students may be eligible for annual or periodic awards for perfect attendance, academic achievement, conduct, and other special awards. Students who are enrolled in VISD schools beginning with Kindergarten and have perfect attendance throughout their entire school careers may be singled out for special recognition at high school graduation ceremonies.

The Victoria ISD Board of Trustees recognizes outstanding students through the Board's Award of Excellence program. Top students in grades five through twelve are honored each spring with certificates and commemorative gifts. Five students per school, per grade level are recognized for grades five through eight. Ten students per grade level at Victoria East and Victoria West High Schools will be recognized. Small elementary schools will submit a lower number of candidates for recognition.

Student selection for the Board Excellence Award is based on an individual student's academic, attendance and conduct record. Students in grades 6-12 must be enrolled in at least one honors, gifted and talented, pre-advanced placement, and/or advanced placement class. Additionally, students in Grades 5-12 must maintain the following criteria through the fall semester: Proper attendance with no unexcused absences in the current school year, appropriate punctuality in each class with no office referrals for excessive tardies, good conduct in the classroom with respect for teachers and fellow students and no office referrals for disciplinary issues. A student's conduct eligibility will be determined at the discretion of the building principal or assistant principal.

Victoria ISD celebrates the accomplishments of students in a variety of manners, including awards assemblies and special presentation events. Parents who do not wish to have their child's honors

publicized through the news media and other means should indicate so during the online registration process.

## **BULLYING**

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a respectful school climate; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

Bullying is defined in state law (Section 37.0832 of the Education Code) as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined by state law (Section 37.0832 of the Education Code) as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

The district is required to adopt policies and procedures regarding:

1. Bullying that occurs on or is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property;
2. Bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of students to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and
3. Cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying. A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by going to the VISD website and completing the Incident Reporting Form found at:

### [Incident Reporting Form](#)

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying.



Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

The parent of a student who has been determined by the district to have been a **victim** of bullying may request that his or her child be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district.

Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the board may transfer the student to another campus in the district.

A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, on the district's Website, and is included at the end of this Handbook in the form of an appendix.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL). [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments, Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation**; policy FFI located on the VISD website and at the back of this handbook; the district's Student Code of Conduct]

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) and OTHER WORK-BASED PROGRAMS**

VISD offers Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and other work-based programs that connect students to post-secondary and career-related endeavors. Students are provided the opportunity to pursue industry-recognized certifications as well as college credit through local articulations of participating community colleges. Some Career and Technical Education courses may satisfy graduation requirements of English, Science, Math, Foreign Language and Fine Arts.

It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The district will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title IX coordinator and the ADA/Section 504 coordinator.

High demand courses may require a selection process to determine participation in accordance with the procedures developed by the CTE department. Factors considered are student attendance, discipline data, and the successful completion of suggested pre-requisites in the suggested sequence as outlined in the VISD Course Selection Guide.

CTE ensures equity of access to all students for all CTE programs, including the categories of special populations as defined below:

"Special population":

- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children
- Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields
- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Displaced homemakers
- Individuals with limited English proficiency

VISD offers three P-TECH programs and general information can be found at <https://www.visd.net/o/ptech> .

For individual P-TECH programs, please see links below for detailed information including enrollment procedures.

P-TECH Healthcare at East High School <https://ptech.visd.net/o/ptech/page/about-p-tech-healthcare>

P-TECH Education and Training at West High School <https://ptech.visd.net/o/ptech/page/about-p-tech-education-and-training>

P-TECH Computer Science <https://ptech.visd.net/o/ptech/page/about-p-tech-computer-science>

## **CTE & Work-based Learning**

Work-based learning is a required component in all VISD CTE courses with a minimum of one work-based learning experience per semester. The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, also known as Perkins V, defines work-based learning as "sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction." Examples of work-based learning include job shadowing, career mentorship, paid internships, non-paid internships, practicums, service learning, simulated workplace experience, non-paid work experiences, paid work experiences, volunteering, guest speakers, and workplace tours/field trips. The CTE Department continues to strengthen and increase the number of work-based learning experiences in all CTE courses.

VISD offers CTE practicum courses consisting of a paid or unpaid capstone experience for students participating in the Programs of Study listed below. Students shall be awarded two credits for successful completion of the practicum course. A student may repeat the practicum course once for credit provided that the student is experiencing different aspects of the industry and demonstrating proficiency in additional and more advanced knowledge and skills. Click on the following link for detailed information on each of the Programs of Study offered in VISD listed below.

### [CTE Programs of Study](#)

Accounting & Financial Services  
Advanced Manufacturing & Machinery Mechanics  
Animal Science  
Applied Agricultural Engineering  
Automotive  
Business Management  
Carpentry  
Cosmetology  
Design & Multimedia Arts  
Electrical  
Engineering  
Healthcare Therapeutic  
Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC)  
Law Enforcement  
Plant Science  
Plumbing  
Programming & Software Development  
Teaching & Training  
Welding

Students who request CTE courses will be scheduled into courses according to the process and procedures of VISD counseling department. Eligible students are students who have completed all



prerequisites for the course. For CTE courses at the secondary campuses, student selection for CTE courses is generated by the VISD eSchoolPlus student management information system. Student selection for CTE courses located at the Career and Technology Institute are determined using a lottery selection.

All Career and Technical Education programs follow the district's policies of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, socioeconomic status or any other basis prohibited by law in all programs, services, activities and employment in accordance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Victoria Independent School District will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

Please visit the VISD CTE Department website at <https://www.visd.net/page/career-and-technical-education> for more information.

### **CELEBRATIONS (All grade Levels)**

Although a parent or grandparent may provide food to share for a school-designated function or for a student's birthday, please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss any classroom allergies with the teacher before bringing food to share.

Occasionally, the school or a class may host functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers to provide food. [See **Food Allergies**.]

### **CHEATING / PLAGIARISM / ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Copying another person's work, such as homework, class work, or a test, is a form of cheating. The use of electronic devices, such as cell phones, in the classroom and in testing situations may cause suspicion of cheating. **(See Electronic Devices and Technology Resources)** Plagiarism, which is the use of another person's original ideas or writing as one's own without giving credit to the true author, will also be considered cheating and the student will be subject to academic disciplinary action that may include loss of credit for the work in question. Teachers who have reason to believe that a student has engaged in cheating or other academic dishonesty will assess the academic penalty to be imposed. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary consequences as well, according to the Student Code of Conduct.

[For more information, see **Honor Code Regulation EIA** found at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net)]

### **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, TRAFFICKING, AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse, sex trafficking, and other maltreatment of children, which may be accessed through the district website under Counseling Department at <https://www.visd.net/page/counseling-resources>

#### ***Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse***

Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct

with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child.

Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

A child who has been or is being sexually abused may exhibit physical, behavioral, or emotional warning signs, including:

- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches;
- Verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior; or
- Withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

Be aware that children and adolescents who have experienced dating violence may show similar physical, behavioral, and emotional warning signs. [See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.**]

### ***Warning Signs of Trafficking***

Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Sex trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services.

Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently contact victims online.

Possible warning signs of sexual trafficking in children include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude;
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology);
- Tattoos or branding;
- Refillable gift cards;
- Frequent runaway episodes;
- Multiple phones or social media accounts;
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone;
- Unexplained injuries;
- Isolation from family, friends, and community; and
- Older boyfriends or girlfriends.

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;
- Owing a large debt and being unable to pay it off;
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours;
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss;
- Not being in control of his or her own money;
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver; and
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.

## ***Reporting and Responding to Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children***

Any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or may be abused, trafficked, or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, to report the suspected abuse or neglect to local law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS) within 48 hours.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Children may be more reluctant to disclose sexual abuse than physical abuse and neglect and may only disclose sexual abuse indirectly. As a parent or trusted adult, it is important to be calm and comforting if your child or another child confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

If your child is a victim of sexual abuse, trafficking, or other maltreatment, the school counselor or principal will provide information on counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs.

To find out what services may be available in your county, see [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Programs Available in Your County](#).

Reports of abuse, trafficking, or neglect may be made to the CPS division of the DFPS at 1-800-252-5400 or on the web at [Texas Abuse Hotline Website](#).

## ***Further Resources on Sexual Abuse, Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children***

The following websites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, trafficking, and other maltreatment of children:

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Factsheet](#)
- [KidsHealth, For Parents, Child Abuse](#)
- [Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team](#)
- [Human Trafficking of School-aged Children](#)
- [Child Sexual Abuse: A Parental Guide from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault](#)
- [National Center of Safe Supportive Learning Environments: Child Labor Trafficking](#)

## **CLASS RANK/HIGHEST- RANKING STUDENT**

Class rank is established by averaging grades from the student's permanent record beginning with the ninth grade and continuing through the Fall Semester of 12<sup>th</sup> grade. For a complete explanation of the Academic Class Rank system, please refer to Policy EIC on the VISD website.

## **CLASS SCHEDULES (Secondary Grade Levels)**

Classes are scheduled for secondary students based on preferences indicated during the course selection process and on required coursework. Students may choose electives and efforts will be made to accommodate those choices based upon class space availability and whether or not the class has enough students registered to allow the course to be offered.

All students are expected to attend school for the entire school day and maintain a class/course schedule to fulfill each period of the day. Exceptions may be made by the campus principal for students in grades 9 through 12 who meet specific criteria and receive parental consent to enroll in less than a full-day schedule.

Students may request schedule changes through the school counselor. Prior parental consent for a schedule change is required. Requests for changes may be denied based on the district schedule change policy. Please refer to the *VISD High School Course Selection Guide* for the guidelines.

## **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID**

For two school years following his or her graduation, a district student who graduates as valedictorian, in the top ten percent and, in some cases, the top 25 percent, of his or her class is eligible for automatic admission into four-year public universities and colleges in Texas if the student:

- Completes the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation graduation program (a student must graduate with at least one endorsement and must have taken Algebra II as one of the four required math courses); or
- Satisfies the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks or earns at least a 1500 out of 2400 on the SAT.

In addition, the student must submit a completed application for admission in accordance with the deadline established by the college or university. The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that he or she meets the admission requirements of the university or college to which the student submits an application.

The University of Texas at Austin may limit the number of students automatically admitted to 75 percent of the University's enrollment capacity for incoming resident freshmen. For students who are eligible to enroll in the University during the summer or fall 2022 terms or spring 2023 term, the University will admit the top six percent of the high school's graduating class who meet the above requirements. Additional applicants will be considered by the University through a holistic review process.

Should a college or university adopt an admissions policy that automatically accepts the top 25 percent of a graduating class, the provisions above will also apply to a student ranked in the top 25 percent of his or her class.

Upon a student's registration for his or her first course that is required for high school graduation, the district will provide written notice concerning:

- Automatic college admission
- Curriculum requirements for financial aid
- Benefits of completing the requirements for automatic admission and financial aid
- The Texas First Early High School Completion Program and the Texas First Scholarship Program

Parents and students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment that they received this information. Students and parents should contact the school counselor for further information about automatic admissions, the application process, and deadlines.

Helpful College Readiness Resources are available by visiting the Counseling Department

<https://www.visd.net/page/college-knowledge>

## **COLLEGE CREDIT COURSES**

Students in grades 9–12 have opportunities to earn college credit through the following methods:

- Certain courses taught at the high school campus, which may include courses termed dual credit or Advanced Placement (AP);
- Enrollment in an AP or dual credit course through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN);
- Enrollment in courses taught in conjunction and in partnership with Victoria College or University of Houston-Victoria which may be offered on or off campus;
- Enrollment in courses taught at other colleges or universities

All of these methods have eligibility requirements and must be approved prior to enrollment in the course. Please see the school counselor for more information. Depending on the student's grade level and the course, a state-mandated end-of-course assessment may be required for graduation.

A student may be eligible for subsidies based on financial need for AP or IB exam fees. See Fees (All Grade Levels) for more information. A student may also earn college credit for certain Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses. See CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) and OTHER WORK-BASED PROGRAMS (Secondary Grade Levels Only) for information on CTE and other work-based programs.

It is important to keep in mind that not all colleges and universities accept credit earned in all dual credit or AP courses taken in high school for college credit. Students and parents should check with the prospective college or university to determine if a particular course will count toward the student's desired degree plan.

## **COMMUNICATIONS (All Grade Levels)**

### **Parent Contact Information**

A parent is legally required to provide in writing the parent's contact information, including address, phone number, and email address. A parent must provide the contact information to the district upon enrollment and again within two weeks after the beginning of each following school year while the student is enrolled in the district. If the parent's contact information changes during the school year, the parent must update the information in writing no more than two weeks after the date the information changes. A parent may update contact information by contacting the campus office.

### **Automated Emergency Communications**

The district will rely on contact information on file with the district to communicate with parents in an emergency situation, which may include real-time or automated messages. An emergency situation may include early dismissal, delayed opening, or restricted access to the campus due to severe weather, another emergency, or a security threat. It is crucial to notify your child's school when a phone number changes. [See **Safety: Emergency School-Closing Information** for information regarding contact with parents during an emergency situation]

### **Automated Nonemergency Communications**

Your child's school periodically sends information by automated or pre-recorded messages, text messages, or real-time phone or email communications that are closely related to the school's mission and specific to your child, your child's school, or the district. Standard messaging rates of your wireless phone carrier may apply.

If you do not wish to receive such communications, please contact your child's principal.

## **COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed informally by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the board has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG (LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy and complaint form is provided in the Appendix to this handbook and is also available on the district's website at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net).

Should a parent or student feel a need to file a formal complaint, the parent or student should file a district complaint form within the timelines established in policy FNG (LOCAL). In general, the student or parent should submit the written complaint form to the campus principal. If the concern is not

resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **CONDUCT**

The board has adopted a Student Code of Conduct that defines standards of acceptable behavior—on and off campus, during remote and in-person instruction, and on district vehicles—and outlines consequences for violation of these standards. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

During summer instruction, the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct in place for the school year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the district amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

### **Campus Behavior Coordinator**

As required by law, a person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator. The designated person may be the principal of the campus or any other campus administrator selected by the principal. The campus behavior coordinator is primarily responsible for maintaining student discipline. The district maintains a current list of campus behavior coordinators and their contact information on the district's website at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net) under the Office of Administration. To achieve great efficiency and increase Restorative Discipline Practices (RDP), the VISD District of Innovation Plan allows multiple administrators at the campus to jointly share in the responsibilities of the campus behavior coordinator function.

### **Disruptions of School Operations**

Disruptions of school operations are not tolerated and may constitute a misdemeanor offense. As identified by state law, disruptions include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the district.

### **Prohibited Participation**

Under state law, a student is prohibited from membership or involvement in a public-school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang.

### **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his



or her guest. A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

## **COUNSELING**

Visit Website: [VISD Counseling Department](#)

### **Academic Counseling**

#### ***Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels***

The school counselor is available to students and parents to talk about the importance of postsecondary education and how best to plan for postsecondary education, including appropriate courses to consider and financial aid availability and requirements.

In either grade 7 or 8, each student will receive instruction related to how the student can best prepare for high school, college, and a career.

#### ***High School Grade Levels***

High school students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn more about course offerings, graduation requirements, differences between graduation programs and early graduation procedures. Each year, high school students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next school year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and CTE opportunities, as well as information on the importance of postsecondary education.

The school counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and application deadlines, as well as information about automatic admission, financial aid, housing, grants and scholarships as these relate to state colleges and universities. The school counselor can also provide information about workforce opportunities after graduation or technical and trade school opportunities, including opportunities to earn industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

### **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional or mental health issues, or substance abuse. A student who wishes to meet with the school counselor should make an appointment with the counselor. As a parent, if you are concerned about your child's mental or emotional health, please speak with the school counselor for a list of resources that may be of assistance. If your child has experienced trauma, contact the school counselor for more information.

[See **Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention, Suicide Awareness and Mental Health Support, and Child Sexual Abuse, Trafficking and Other Maltreatment of Children and Dating Violence**]

## **COURSE CREDIT**

A student in grades 9–12, or in a lower grade when a student is enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course, will earn credit for a course only if the final grade is 70 or above. For a two-semester (1 credit) course, the student's grades from both semesters will be averaged and credit will be awarded if the combined average is 70 or above. Should the student's combined average be less than 70, the student will be awarded credit only for the half (semester) with the passing grade.

## **CREDIT BY EXAMINATION**

VISD students may use Credit by Examination (CBEs) to earn credit in any academic course for which the district offers. All such examinations shall assess the student's mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in the applicable subject/grade level and shall be approved by the district's board of trustees.

### **If a Student Has Taken the Course/Subject (All Grade Levels)**

A student who has previously taken a course or subject but did not receive credit or a final grade for it may, in circumstances determined by the principal or attendance committee, be permitted to earn credit or a final grade by passing an examination approved by the district's board of trustees on the essential knowledge and skills defined for that course or subject.

Examples of prior instruction include incomplete coursework due to a failed course or excessive absences, homeschooling, or coursework by a student transferring from a nonaccredited school. The opportunity to earn credit by examination after the student has had prior instruction is sometimes referred to as "credit recovery."

The attendance review committee may also offer a student with excessive absences an opportunity to earn credit for a course by passing an examination.

If a student is granted approval to take an examination for credit, the student must score at least 70 on the examination to receive credit for the course or subject.

For students previously enrolled in applicable STAAR End-of-Course classes and earning course credit through examination, passing the STAAR End of Course test is still a state graduation requirement.

[See the school counselor and policy EHDB(LOCAL) for more information.]

### **If a Student Has Not Taken the Course/Subject (Advancement/Acceleration)**

A student will be permitted to earn credit by examination for an academic course or subject area for which the student had no prior instruction for advancement or to accelerate to the next grade level.

The examinations offered by the district are approved by the district's board of trustees. Testing windows for these examinations will be published in district publications and on the district's website. A student may take a specific examination only once per testing window.

The only exceptions to the published testing windows will be for examinations administered by another entity or to accommodate a student experiencing homelessness or a student involved in the foster care system.

When another entity administers an examination, the student and the district must comply with the testing schedule of the other entity.

If a student plans to take an examination, the student or parent must register with the school counselor no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled testing date. [See policy EHDC for more information.]

To begin the process, parents and/or students contact the campus counselor or principal to determine eligibility and receive an application. Classwork, state assessments, and previous CBE scores along with attendance will be considered to determine eligibility.

During each testing window provided by the district, a student may attempt a specific examination only once. For students earning advancement/acceleration credit for a course through examination, the applicable STAAR End-of-Course test will not be a state graduation requirement. When the student



receives credit for this course, school district personnel must record the examination score on the transcript. The grades will not be used to determine a student's grade point average or class standing.

### ***Kindergarten Acceleration***

In accordance with State Board rules, the Board shall approve procedures developed by the Superintendent or designee to allow a child who is five years old at the beginning of the school year to be assigned initially to grade 1 rather than kindergarten. Criteria for acceleration may include:

1. Scores on readiness tests or achievement tests that may be administered by appropriate District personnel.
2. Recommendation of the kindergarten or preschool the student has attended.
3. Chronological age and observed social and emotional development of the student.
4. Other criteria deemed appropriate by the principal and Superintendent.

### ***Students in Grades 1–5***

A student in elementary school is eligible to accelerate to the next grade level if:

- The student scores at least an 80 on each examination in the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
- A district administrator recommends that the student be accelerated; and
- The student's parent gives written approval of the grade advancement.

### ***Students in Grades 6–12***

A student in grade 6 or above is eligible to earn course credit through acceleration with:

- A passing score of at least 80 on an examination approved by the board; or
- A scaled score of 50 or higher on an examination administered through the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or
- A score of 3 or higher on an AP examination, as applicable.

A student may take an examination to earn high school course credit no more than twice. If a student fails to achieve the designated score on the applicable exam before the beginning of the school year in which the student would need to enroll in the course according to the school's high school course sequence, the student must complete the course.

For additional information on Credit by Examination including testing dates and study guides, please see the VISD Assessment & Accountability Department's Credit by Examination webpage.

## **DATING VIOLENCE, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, HAZING AND RETALIATION**

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from dating violence, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect, to avoid behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy FFH, a copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office, the superintendent's office and on the district's website]

## Dating Violence

**Dating violence will not be tolerated at school. To report dating violence, see Reporting Procedures below.** Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Dating violence also occurs when a person commits these acts against a person in a marriage or dating relationship with the individual who is or was once in a marriage or dating relationship with the person committing the offense. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults; name-calling; put-downs; threats to hurt the student, the student's family members, or members of the student's household; destroying property belonging to the student; threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship; threats to harm a student's current dating partner; attempts to isolate the student from friends and family; stalking; or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

In accordance with law, when the district receives a report of dating violence, a district official will immediately notify the parent of the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

The counselor's office has additional information about the dangers of dating violence and resources for seeking help.

For more information on dating violence, see:

- Texas Attorney General's office recognizing and responding to dating violence flier: [Dating Violence Flyer](#)
- The CDC's Preventing Teen Dating Violence [Preventing Dating Violence- CDC](#)

[See Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking.]

## Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that negatively affects the student.

## Harassment

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

In addition to dating violence as described above, two other types of prohibited harassment are described below.

## Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student are prohibited.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but not be limited to, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature, such as comforting a child with a hug or taking the child's hand. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

## Hazing

Hazing is defined by Section 37.151 of the Education Code as an intentional, knowing, or reckless act, on or off campus, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student for the purpose of pledging, initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in a student organization if the act meets the elements in Education Code 37.151, including:

- Any type of physical brutality;
- An activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the student's mental or physical health, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement to small spaces, calisthenics, or consumption of food, liquids, drugs, or other substances;
- An activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that violates the Penal Code; and
- Coercing a student to consume a drug or alcoholic beverage in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe the student is intoxicated.

Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

[Also see **Bullying** and **Prohibited Participation** and policies FFI and FNCC]

## Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline.

Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, hazing or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. Reports may also be made utilizing the Incident Reporting Form found at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net) and also available in school offices. Written reports should be submitted to the campus assistant principal or principal.

[See policy FFH(LOCAL) and (EXHIBIT) for more information regarding making a report]

Upon receiving a report of prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, the district will determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by that policy. If not, the district will refer to policy FFI to determine if the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying, as defined by law and that policy. If the alleged prohibited conduct, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct and would also be considered bullying as defined by law and policy FFI, an investigation of bullying will also be conducted.

The district will promptly notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct involving an adult associated with the district. In the event alleged prohibited conduct involves another student, the district will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy FFH.

## **Investigation of Report**

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations of prohibited conduct, which includes dating violence, discrimination, harassment, hazing and retaliation, will be promptly investigated.

If a law enforcement or other regulatory agency notifies the district that it is investigating the matter and requests that the district delay its investigation, the district will resume the investigation at the conclusion of the agency's investigation.

During the course of an investigation and when appropriate, the district will take interim action to address the alleged prohibited conduct.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, and, in some cases, corrective action, will be taken to address the conduct. The district may take disciplinary and corrective action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

All involved parties will be notified of the outcome of the district investigation within the parameters and limits allowed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

## **DELIVERIES**

Except in emergencies, delivery of messages or packages to students will not be allowed during instructional time. A parent may leave a message or a package, such as a forgotten lunch, for the student to pick up from the front office during a passing period or lunch.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation**]

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

Distance learning and correspondence courses include courses that encompass the state-required essential knowledge and skills but are taught through multiple technologies and alternative methodologies such as mail, satellite, Internet, video-conferencing, and instructional television.

If a student wishes to enroll in a correspondence course or a distance learning course that is not provided through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN), as described below, to earn credit in a course or subject, the student must receive permission from the principal prior to enrolling in the course or subject. If the student does not receive prior approval, the district may not recognize and apply the course or subject toward graduation requirements or subject mastery.

### **Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) (Secondary Grade Levels)**

The Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN) has been established by the state as one method of distance learning. A student has the option, with certain limitations, to enroll in a course offered through the TXVSN to earn course credit for graduation. TEA provides online courses to enrolled students. The TXVSN is made up of two components – the course catalog and the full-time online schools. This service primarily serves high school students with CTE courses, AP courses, dual credit courses, foreign language courses and much more.

Depending on the TXVSN course in which a student enrolls, the course may be subject to the “no pass, no play” rules. [See **Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations**] In addition, for a student who enrolls in a TXVSN course for which an end-of-course (EOC) assessment is required, the student must still take the corresponding EOC assessment.

For questions, or to make a request for enrollment in a TXVSN course, contact the school counselor. Unless an exception is made by the principal, a student will not be allowed to enroll in a TXVSN course if the school offers the same or a similar course. To access the district's complete Distance Learning policy, go to [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net) and review policy EHDE(LEGAL) and (LOCAL).

## **DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, PUBLISHED MATERIALS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS**

### **School Materials**

School publications distributed to students include school newspapers, class assigned collections of student produced writings, and yearbooks. All school publications are under the supervision of the teacher, sponsor, and principal.

### **Non-school Materials from Students and from Others**

Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school may not be sold, circulated, posted, distributed or made available on any school campus by a student or a non-student without the approval of the principal except as permitted by policy GKDA. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization.

### **Approval Required**

All material intended for distribution to students that is not under the District's editorial control must be submitted to the principal for review and approval. If the material is not approved within two school

days of the time it was submitted, it is considered disapproved. Appeals of disapproval may be made in accordance with appropriate Board policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF]

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD (LOCAL) or a non-curriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with FNAB (LOCAL).
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All non-school materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

A student may appeal a principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL). Any student who sells, posts, circulates, or distributes non-school material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without the principal's approval will be removed.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

### **General Guidelines**

The District's dress code reflects high expectations for success for all students. It promotes school safety, teaches cooperation, grooming, hygiene, respect for authority, and instills self-discipline. The dress code prepares students for future settings, underscores the importance of dress and grooming in a manner that attire will not be a health or safety hazard nor an education distracter to themselves, others, and society. The student and parent may determine the student's personal dress and grooming standards provided they comply with these general guidelines and the District's dress standards.

The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the principal's judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations. The District prohibits pictures, emblems, or writings that are violent, lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene or that advertise or depict weapons, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs or any other substance prohibited under Policy FNCF (LOCAL).

Exemptions for religious or medical reasons may be addressed through campus administration. When medically necessary and upon presentation of a recent statement from a medical doctor stating the medical necessity, the campus may waive certain provisions of the dress standards. The waiver must be medically related and when possible, for a specified period of time. A campus may request an updated medical statement if it appears the medical condition no longer exists.

All VISD students will be expected to adhere to the VISD Dress and Grooming Standards in all instructional settings.

### **Dress Standards**

The campus site-based decision-making teams may recommend exceptions to the traditional dress code for approval by the principal and superintendent. Exceptions to the dress code due to unusual situations may be left to the discretion of the building principal on an individual basis in consultation with the superintendent or his designee. Exceptions to the dress code may be made at District Alternative Education Program (DAEP) locations and O'Connor ACE. Dress standards for DAEP students will be determined by the campus administrator and clearly communicated. See Dress and Grooming Standards for O'Connor ACE Elementary.



## Special Events or Activities

Administration shall have authority to waive the wearing of standardized dress for certain days due to special events or special activities. Students who choose not to participate in the special events or activities are expected to adhere to VISD dress code standards.

## Extra-Curricular Dress Code

The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. Students who violate dress and grooming standards established for such an activity may be removed or excluded from the activity for a period determined by the principal or sponsor and may be subject to other disciplinary action as specified in the *Student Code of Conduct*.

## Compliance and Final Authority

If a student attends school in violation of the dress code, disciplinary steps as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct* and *Student Handbook* will be taken. If the principal determines that a student's grooming violates the dress code, the student shall be given an opportunity to correct the problem at school or may be directed to the appropriate resources to comply. If not corrected, the student shall be assigned to in-school suspension for the remainder of the day or until the problem is corrected. Repeated offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*. Appropriate discipline procedures shall be followed in all cases. School administrators will have complete and final judgment on all matters concerning interpretation of the student dress code. Principals will develop enforcement guidelines to assure consistency in implementing the district dress code.

## Dress and Grooming Standards

Elementary Pre-Kinder - Grade 5	Secondary Grades 6-12
<p><b><i>All clothing must be appropriately sized. Clothing may not be oversized or baggy.</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Shirts/Blouses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All shirts, blouses, sweaters, sweatshirts, and tops with waistbands that are not tucked in must be neatly hemmed and fall no longer than the fingertips while standing. If it does not comply with these standards, it must be tucked in.</li><li>• The midriff section must be kept covered at all times. Student's neckline must not show cleavage.</li><li>• Tank tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, string straps, sleeveless, or shirts with torn out/frayed sleeves are not permitted. White undershirts worn by themselves are not permitted.</li><li>• No clothing containing graphics related to gangs, depicting illegal activities or substances or glorifying blood, gore, weapons, or violence will be allowed. If the shirt/t-shirt contains a slogan and/or graphic, it must be appropriate as determined by campus administration.</li></ul> <p>➤ <b><i>O'Connor ACE Elementary Guidelines-</i></b> <b><i>All O'Connor ACE Elementary scholars will be REQUIRED to wear a uniform shirt each day of the school week. No other shirt/blouse will be allowed. Because the uniform shirt is a requirement:</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>All clothing must be appropriately sized. Clothing may not be oversized or baggy.</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Shirts/Blouses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The necklines of all shirts, blouses, sweaters, sweatshirts and tops must not show any cleavage.</li><li>• Sleeved, buttoned, collared shirts are allowed. All buttons must be buttoned with the exception of the collar button. Students may not wear sleeveless shirts including the cold-shoulder style.</li><li>• All shirts, blouses, sweaters, sweatshirts and tops with waistbands that are not tucked in must be neatly hemmed and fall no longer than the fingertips while standing. If it does not comply with these standards, it must be tucked in.</li><li>• The midriff section must be kept covered at all times. Student's neckline must not show any cleavage.</li><li>• Tank tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, string straps, sleeveless, or shirts with torn out/frayed sleeves are not permitted. White undershirts worn by themselves are not permitted.</li><li>• No clothing containing graphics related to gangs, depicting illegal activities or substances or glorifying blood, gore, weapons, or violence will be allowed. If the shirt/t-shirt contains a slogan and/or graphic, it must be appropriate as determined by campus administration.</li></ul>

- Each O'Connor ACE scholar will be provided 4 green polo style shirts, at no cost to the scholar. The polo style shirt will be worn every Monday-Thursday.
- Scholars will also receive an O'Connor ACE Elementary spirit shirt that is to be worn on Fridays only.
- Shirts may be personalized with student name or school logo.
- Scholars will follow VISD guidelines for all other clothing requirements.

#### **Pants/jeans/ shorts/ skorts/ capri/ leggings**

- Pants/jeans, shorts, skorts, or capri pants must be appropriately fitted, may not be oversized or of a baggy style and must be worn at the waist.
- Embellishments are allowed as long as they are not deemed a distraction by administration. See-through clothing is not permitted
- Pants/jeans, shorts, skorts, or capri pants must be properly hemmed or cuffed.
- Pants may not be torn/frayed/ripped three (3) inches above the knee while standing.
- Shorts and skorts may be no shorter than fingertip length while standing.
- Leggings are only permitted under skirts, dresses, tops, and blouses that are no shorter than fingertip length while standing.
- Pajama bottoms, biking shorts, wind shorts, and workout shorts are not permitted.

#### **Dresses/Skirts/Split Skirts**

- Dresses and skirts must be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee while standing. The "top of the slit on the dress/skirt" must be no higher than three (3) inches above the knee while standing.
- Dresses cannot have a low-cut front or back neckline.
- The necklines of all dresses must not show any cleavage.

#### **Outerwear**

- Outerwear is defined as anything worn over the standardized dress, such as, but not limited to hoodies, jackets and coats.
- All jackets, sweaters and sweatshirts must be appropriately sized.
- Trench coats, capes, and any other outerwear deemed by administration to be a distraction or potential safety hazard will not be permitted. Campus administration has the authority to impose additional standards for outerwear.

#### **Fabrics and Undergarments**

- See-through fabrics or materials that show skin or undergarments is not permitted.
- Torn/frayed/ripped clothing showing skin more than three (3) inches above the knee while standing is not permitted
- Appropriate undergarments must be worn and should not be visible.

#### **Shoes**

- Shoes shall be worn at all times.
- Shoes with taps, grooves, wheels, house shoes/house slippers, and rubber shower shoes (three prong type) are not allowed.

#### **Pants/jeans/ shorts/ skorts/ capri/ leggings**

- Pants/jeans, shorts, skorts, or capri pants must be appropriately fitted, may not be oversized or of a baggy style and must be worn at the waist.
- Embellishments are allowed as long as they are not deemed a distraction by administration. See-through clothing is not permitted.
- Pants/jeans, shorts, skorts, or capri pants must be properly hemmed or cuffed.
- Pants may not be torn/frayed/ripped three (3) inches above the knee while standing.
- Shorts and skorts may be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee while standing.
- Sweatpants, wind pants, warm-ups, and athletic shorts are not allowed.
- Leggings are only permitted if worn under skirts and dresses.

#### **Dresses/Skirts/Split Skirts**

- Dresses and skirts must be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee while standing. The "top of the slit on the dress/skirt" must be no higher than three (3) inches above the knee while standing.
- Dresses cannot have a low-cut front or back neckline.
- The necklines of all dresses must not show any cleavage.

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- All jackets, sweaters and sweatshirts must be appropriately sized.
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- Appropriate undergarments will be worn and should not be visible.

#### **Shoes**

- Shoes shall be worn at all times.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shoes should be appropriate for identified physical and instructional activities.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Caps/Hats/Headgear</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caps, hats, headgear, and hoods on hoodies, jackets, and coats may not be worn inside the building unless a written statement of medical need is provided.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Tattoos</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All tattoos must be covered.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Hair</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mohawks are not allowed.</li> <li>Hair must not cover the eyes.</li> <li>Hair nets, hair curlers, and hair accessories, such as, but not limited to, oriental hair pins, hat pins, or genie cones that could be used to hurt others are not permitted.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Accessories</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessories (such as distracting jewelry, wallet/pocket chains, spiked or studded rings and collars, mouth grills, etc.) which can be used as weapons or be deemed dangerous or inappropriate are not allowed.</li> <li>Bandanas are not allowed.</li> <li>Gauges are not allowed.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Glasses/Contact Lenses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dark-lensed glasses are not permitted unless a written statement of medical need is provided by a physician or eye care specialist.</li> <li>Contact lenses that are not natural color and are disruptive to the educational environment will not be permitted.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Masks- OPTIONAL</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks are not required</li> <li>Students may wear masks with the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks are not permitted with pictures, emblems, or writings that are violent, lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene or that advertise or depict weapons, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs or any other substance prohibited under Policy FNCF (LOCAL).</li> <li>Masks containing a slogan and/or graphic, must be appropriate as determined by campus administration.</li> <li>Masks that are made from or resemble bandanas are not allowed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shoes with taps, grooves, wheels, house shoes/house slippers, and rubber shower shoes (three prong type) are not allowed.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Caps/Hats/Headgear</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caps, hats, headgear, and hoods on hoodies, jackets, and coats may not be worn inside the building unless a written statement of medical need is provided.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Tattoos</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All tattoos containing graphics related to gangs, depicting illegal activities or substances or glorifying blood, gore, weapons, or violence must be covered.</li> <li>All visible tattoos must be appropriate as determined by campus administration.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Hair/Facial Hair</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mohawks are not allowed.</li> <li>Hair nets, hair curlers, and hair accessories, such as, but not limited to, oriental hair pins, hat pins, or genie cones that could be used to hurt others are not permitted.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Accessories</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessories (such as distracting jewelry, wallet/pocket chains, spiked or studded rings and collars, mouth grills, etc.) which can be used as weapons or be deemed dangerous or inappropriate are not allowed.</li> <li>Bandanas are not allowed.</li> <li>Gauges are not allowed.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Glasses/Contact Lenses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dark-lensed glasses are not permitted unless a written statement of medical need is provided by a physician or eye care specialist.</li> <li>Contact lenses that are not natural color and are disruptive to the educational environment will not be permitted.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Masks- OPTIONAL</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks are not required</li> <li>Students may wear masks with the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks are not permitted with pictures, emblems, or writings that are violent, lewd, offensive, vulgar, or obscene or that advertise or depict weapons, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs or any other substance prohibited under Policy FNCF (LOCAL).</li> <li>Masks containing a slogan and/or graphic, must be appropriate as determined by campus administration.</li> <li>Masks that are made from or resemble bandanas are not allowed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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## DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The Victoria Independent School District believes that student use of alcohol and illicit drugs is both wrong and harmful. Consequently, the District has established a code of student conduct that prohibits the use, sale, possession, and distribution of alcohol and illicit drugs by students on school premises or as part of any school activity, regardless of its location. Compliance with this code of conduct is mandatory, and students shall be disciplined if they are found to have violated this code of conduct.

The District's policies and its Student Code of Conduct provide disciplinary sanctions for alcohol and drug-related offenses. In addition, they may be referred to appropriate law enforcement officials for criminal prosecution. Procedural requirements for the imposition of suspension and expulsion are set out in the Board's policies.

Depending on the nature and severity of a drug or alcohol-related offense, a student may be required to complete an appropriate rehabilitation program in addition to other school discipline. The principal or counselor can provide information about rehabilitation and re-entry programs that are available in our community or within reasonable access of our community.

All VISD School Nurses have received Drug Impairment Training for Educational Professionals.

## **DRUG TESTING PROGRAM**

The Board of Trustees promotes the health and safety of students and prohibits illegal drug use and abuse. Procedures for drug testing of students in extracurricular activities and for students to receive school parking privileges have been adopted. Parents of students in Grades 7-12 may also request that their child be voluntarily included in the random drug testing program. [See Policy FNF(LOCAL)]

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

### **Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones**

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones. However, students shall not use a telecommunication device, including a cellular telephone, smart watch or other electronic device in violation of district and campus rules. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers. These telecommunication devices must remain turned off during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes.

Because of strict security protocols established by the Texas Education Agency, during standardized testing, students are expected to turn over their mobile communication devices to the test monitor. Failure to comply may result in sanctions against the student.

The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

Using any device that permits recording the voice or image of another in any way that either disrupts the educational environment, invades the privacy of others, or is made without the prior consent of the individuals being recorded is prohibited. Using any device that permits recording the voice or image of another to take, disseminate, transfer or share audio images, video or photographs that reveal private parts of the body that are ordinarily covered by clothing is strictly prohibited by the district and by state law.

Under no circumstances should cell phones be used to take pictures in any school facility. This is especially important because of privacy issues related to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protects student privacy. If an administrator suspects that a cell phone or other communication device may contain photos taken at school or inappropriate photos, the photos will be reviewed in the presence of the student prior to being claimed by the parent/guardian. Students will be required to delete school-related photos that were not taken at an event open to the public. Additionally, police will be contacted if an administrator has reason to believe that a photo might be a violation of the law.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, if an administrator has a reasonable suspicion that a cell phone or other communication device was used in violation of district and campus rules, a

student's personal telecommunications device may be searched by authorized personnel. [See **Searches** and policy FNF(LEGAL)] Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

A student who uses a telecommunications device during the school day in violation of district and campus rules shall have the device confiscated. Upon first offense, the parent may pick up the confiscated telecommunications device from the principal's office. Upon second offense, a fee of \$15.00 will be charged before the device is released to the parent. For the third offense, the device will be held until the end of the school year, at which time it will be released to the parent after payment of a \$15 fee. (See Student Code of Conduct) Confiscated telecommunications devices that are not retrieved by the student's parent/guardian will become the property of the district if unclaimed by the last day of the school year. The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices. [See policy FNCE(LOCAL) and **Unclaimed Property**]

### **Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices**

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. Also, earbud and headphone use for non-instructional purposes in the classroom or during passing periods is not permitted. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

In limited circumstances and in accordance with law, a student's personal electronic device may be searched by authorized personnel. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device. [See **Searches** and policy FNF(LEGAL)]

### **Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

In some cases, students may be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for student use (separate from this handbook). Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources**

District-owned technology resources for instructional purposes may be issued to individual students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Parents and students will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding the child's use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action for the student. Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail and other electronic communications using district computers are not private and will be monitored by district staff. [For additional information, see policy CQ]

### **Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources**

Students are prohibited from possessing, sending, forwarding, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition also applies to conduct off school property, whether the

equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, possessing, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as “sexting,” will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, may be required to complete an educational program related to the dangers of this type of behavior, and, in certain circumstances, may be reported to law enforcement. Because engaging in this type of behavior can lead to bullying or harassment, as well as possibly impede future endeavors of a student, we encourage you to review with your child “Before You Text” Sexting Prevention Course <https://txssc.txstate.edu/tools/courses/before-you-text/>

a state-developed program that addresses the consequences of engaging in inappropriate behavior using technology.

In addition, any student who engages in conduct that results in a breach of the district’s computer security will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and, in some cases, the consequence may rise to the level of expulsion.

## ENGLISH LEARNERS

A student who is an English learner is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student’s parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for an English learner. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.

In order to determine a student’s level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services, and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs that the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student’s continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR Spanish, as mentioned at **Standardized Testing**, may be administered to an English learner, for a student up to grade 5. In limited circumstances, a student’s LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I end-of-course (EOC) assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to English learners who qualify for services.

If a student is considered an English learner and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student’s ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

## ENROLLING A STUDENT

The Victoria Independent School District uses a convenient online registration process for all students. This process eliminates the need for pre-registration, completing numerous paper forms, and waiting in lines at the school to register in August. In order to begin school, every student must be registered using the online registration system found on the district website (visd.net). Students who are not registered via the online system may NOT have a course schedule and/or may NOT have a school/teacher assignment on the first day of school. Documents such as proof of address, photo ID, etc. can be scanned and uploaded from your personal computer or mobile device into the online registration system. If this is not possible, then the documents may be hand-delivered to the campus. A student’s information is submitted at the end of the online registration process, but it is not considered

“COMPLETE” until all required documentation (including proof of address and parent/guardian photo ID) has been uploaded or submitted to the school office. Parents/guardians will need to go through this process for each student to be enrolled. If a parent does not have internet access or needs access to a computer to register online, he/she may call any VISD campus to use a computer at the school. Be sure to take all necessary information and documentation that will be needed for the registration process so that your child is considered enrolled. Please call the school or the VISD Student Services Office at 361-788-9250 should you need further assistance.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS**

Participation in school-sponsored activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Participation in some of these activities may result in events that occur off-campus. When the district arranges transportation for these events, students are required to use the transportation provided by the district to and from the events. Exceptions to this may only be made with the approval of the activity’s coach or sponsor and/or the principal.

Eligibility for initial and continuing participation in many of these activities is governed by state law, district regulations and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL) – a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. If a student is involved in an academic, athletic, music or other activity governed by UIL, the student and parent are expected to know and follow all rules of the UIL organization. Students involved in UIL athletic activities and their parents can access the UIL Parent Information Manual at <https://www.uil texas.org/athletics/manuals>. A hard copy can be provided by the coach or sponsor of the activity on request. To report a complaint of alleged noncompliance with required safety training or an alleged violation of safety rules required by law and the UIL, please contact the curriculum division of TEA at (512) 463-9581 or [curriculum@tea.texas.gov](mailto:curriculum@tea.texas.gov). [See <http://www.uil texas.org> for additional information on all UIL-governed activities]

Student safety in extracurricular activities is a priority of the district. The equipment used in football is no exception. As a parent, you are entitled to review the district’s records regarding the age of each football helmet used by the campus, including when a helmet has been reconditioned.

Generally, a student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class – other than an Advanced Placement (AP) course or an honors or dual credit course in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or language other than English – may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks. Students enrolled in at least one course designated as Advance Placement or Pre-Advanced Placement may be able to retain their eligibility if the grade in that class is at least a 65. The exemption should be filed with the campus principal within the first week of the grading period. Only one class exemption may be applied per semester.

If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of an essential knowledge and skills in public performance and the student receives a grade below 70 at the end of the grading period, the student may participate in a performance so long as the general public is invited. If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course music course that participates in UIL Concert and Sightreading Evaluation, and the student receives a grade below 70 at the end of a grading period, the student may perform with the ensemble during the UIL evaluation performance but is ineligible for other extracurricular activities for at least three weeks.

In addition, the following provisions apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives special education services and who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse but may not participate in any competitive activity.



- While students are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities, academic achievement is still of primary importance. To that end, VISD makes no distinction between absences for UIL activities and absences for other extracurricular activities approved by the Board. A student is allowed in a school year up to 20 extracurricular absences. Upon request, a student may have additional extracurricular absences approved by the Superintendent or designee. [See FM(LOCAL)]
- An absence for participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

## **Standards of Behavior for Participants**

Sponsors and coaches of extracurricular activities may establish and enforce standards of behavior – including consequences for misbehavior – that are stricter than the District-developed Student Code of Conduct and may condition membership or participation in the activity on adherence to those standards. Extracurricular standards of behavior may take into consideration conduct that occurs at any time, on or off school property. No provision of an extracurricular behavioral standard shall have the effect of discriminating on the basis of sex, race, disability, religion, or ethnicity.

Such extracurricular behavior standards shall be approved by the principal and the Superintendent or designee before they are communicated to students. Students shall be informed of any extracurricular behavior standards at the beginning of each school year or, in the case of interscholastic athletics and marching band, at the time the students report for workouts or practice that occur prior to the actual beginning of classes. Students and their parents shall sign and return to the sponsor or coach a statement that they have read the extracurricular behavior standards and consent to them as a condition of participation in the activity.

Organizational standards of conduct of an extracurricular activity are in addition to the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of these standards of conduct that are also violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions. In all cases, the Code of Conduct supersedes organizational standards and will be enforced. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct or by board policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization's standards of behavior.

A student may be removed from participation in extracurricular activities or may be excluded from school honors for violation of organizational standards of conduct for an extracurricular activity or for violation of the Student Code of Conduct. VISD students who are involved in extracurricular activities must have the participation in drug screening consent on file prior to the beginning of the activity.

[For further information, see policies at FM and FO]

## **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.

- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- In some cases, a fee for a course taken through the Texas Virtual School Network (TXVSN).
- A maximum fee of \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit or has not been awarded a final grade because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- Fees for student participation in a field trip to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the school principal. [For further information, see policy FP]

## **FUNDRAISING**

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes in accordance with administrative regulations. An application for permission must be made to the school principal. [For further information, see policies at FJ and GE] Food items sold as fund raisers must meet the Smart Snack guidelines. The only exceptions are the designated “Party Days” determined by the school Principal.

## **GANG-FREE ZONES**

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

## **GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation**]

## **GPA EXEMPTION**

VISD encourages all students to experience a variety of opportunities and participate in the arts, athletics and competitive programs. Students should not be limited in their choices due to GPA constraints based on class weighting. A GPA exemption will allow a student to take a non-weighted course without calculating it into his/her GPA. This option is available to juniors and seniors who wish to take a course that is not needed to meet graduation requirements. Students electing this option must return a completed form to the school counselor prior to the third week of the semester.

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that each campus or instructional level develops guidelines for teachers to follow in arriving at nine-week and semester grades for students. Grading guidelines for each grade level or course will be communicated and distributed to students and their parents by the classroom teacher. These grading guidelines shall ensure that a sufficient number of grades are taken to support the average grade assigned. In addition, these guidelines establish how the student’s mastery of concepts and achievement will be communicated (i.e., letter grades, numerical

averages, checklist of required skills, etc.). Procedures for a student to follow after an absence will also be addressed.

Grades shall not be reduced for disciplinary reasons except in the case of late assignments, academic dishonesty or as otherwise permitted by the Student Code of Conduct. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed by anyone other than the teacher unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the District's grading policy. The Board's decision is not subject to appeal.

The grading system for the District consists of a numerical scale for grades 1-12. Grades which are temporarily incomplete will be indicated by the mark "I". To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of 70 or higher based upon course-level or grade-level standards and meet attendance requirements.

Students will be expected to make up assignments and tests after excused and unexcused absences and will have the same number of days to make-up work as they have been absent. If assignments or tests are not made up in the allotted time, students shall then receive a zero. The District does not impose a grade penalty on assignments or tests for late work due to an unexcused absence or an absence due to suspension.

The complete District Grading Guidelines are available in school offices and on the VISD website at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net). Click on "Policies and Regulations" and then "EIA-Regulation: District Grading Guidelines."

[See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** for additional information]

## **GRADUATION**

### **Requirements for a Diploma**

A student must meet the following requirements to receive a high school diploma from the district:

- Complete the required number of credits established by the state and any additional credits required by the district;
- Complete any locally required courses in addition to the courses mandated by the state;
- Achieve passing scores on certain end-of-course (EOC) assessments or approved substitute assessments, unless specifically waived as permitted by state law; and
- Demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the district, in the specific communication skills required by the State Board of Education (SBOE).
- Receive instruction at least once in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) as required by TAC 74.38;
- Receive instruction at least once on proper interaction with peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters as required by TAC 74.39;
- Complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or a Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) as a state requirement for graduation. TEC 28.0256 allows a student to opt out of the financial aid application requirement by submitting a signed form that authorizes the student to decline.

[See **Financial Aid Application Requirements**]

### **Testing Requirements for Graduation**

Students are required, with limited exceptions and regardless of graduation program, to perform satisfactorily on the following EOC assessments: English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S.



History. A student who has not achieved sufficient scores on the EOC assessments to graduate will have opportunities to retake the assessments. State law and state rules also provide for certain scores on norm-referenced national standardized assessments or on the state-developed assessment used for entrance into Texas public universities to substitute for the requirement to meet satisfactory performance on an applicable EOC assessment, should a student choose this option. See the school counselor for more information on the state testing requirements for graduation.

If a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an EOC assessment, the district will provide remediation to the student in the content area for which the performance standard was not met. This may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours or at times of the year outside normal school operations.

In limited circumstances, a student who fails to demonstrate proficiency on two or fewer of the required assessments may still be eligible to graduate if an individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, unanimously determines that the student is eligible to graduate. [See **Standardized Testing** for more information]

### **Foundation Graduation Program**

Every student in a Texas public school who entered grade 9 in the 2014–15 school year and thereafter will graduate under the “Foundation Graduation Program.” Within the Foundation Graduation Program are “endorsements,” which are paths of interest that include Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Business and Industry; Public Services; Arts and Humanities; and Multidisciplinary Studies. Endorsements earned by a student will be noted on the student’s transcript. The foundation graduation program also involves the term “distinguished level of achievement” which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits. A personal graduation plan will be completed for each high school student.

State law generally prohibits a student from graduating solely under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement. However, after the student’s sophomore year, the student and student’s parent may request that the student graduate without an endorsement. The district will advise the student and the student’s parent of the specific benefits of graduating with an endorsement. The student and the student’s parent must then submit written permission to the school counselor for the student to graduate without an endorsement.

A student who anticipates graduating under the foundation graduation program without an endorsement and who wishes to attend a four-year university or college after graduation must carefully consider whether this will satisfy the admission requirements of the student’s desired college or university. Graduating under the Foundation Graduation Program will also provide opportunities to earn “performance acknowledgments” that will be acknowledged on a student’s transcript. Performance acknowledgments are available for outstanding performance in bilingualism and biliteracy, in a dual credit course, on an AP or IB exam, on certain national college preparatory and readiness or college entrance exams, or for earning a state recognized or nationally or internationally recognized license or certificate. The criteria for earning these performance acknowledgments are prescribed by state rules, and the school counselor can provide more information about these acknowledgments.

A student is not required to complete an Algebra II course to graduate under the foundation graduation program, and the district will annually notify a student’s parent of this fact. However, the student and parent should be aware that not taking Algebra II will make a student ineligible for automatic admission to four-year public universities and colleges in Texas and for certain financial aid and grants while attending those institutions.

A student must specify upon entering grade 9 which endorsement he or she wishes to pursue.

## Personal Graduation Plans

A personal graduation plan will be developed for each high school student. The district encourages all students to pursue a personal graduation plan that includes the completion of at least one endorsement and to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement. Attainment of the distinguished level of achievement entitles a student to be considered for automatic admission to a public four-year college or university in Texas, depending on his or her rank in class. The school will review personal graduation plan options with each student entering grade 9 and his or her parent. Before the end of grade 9, a student and his or her parent will be required to sign off on a personal graduation plan that includes a course of study that promotes college and workforce readiness and career placement and advancement, as well as facilitates the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The student's personal graduation plan will denote an appropriate course sequence based on the student's choice of endorsement. Please also review *TEA's Graduation Toolkit*.

A student may, with parental permission, amend his or her personal graduation plan after the initial confirmation.

## Students with Disabilities

Upon the recommendation of the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee, a student with a disability who receives special education services may be permitted to graduate under the provisions of his or her individualized education program (IEP) and in accordance with state rules.

A student who receives special education services and has completed four years of high school but has not met the requirements of his or her IEP, may participate in graduation ceremonies and receive a certificate of attendance. Even if the student participates in graduation ceremonies to receive the certificate of attendance, he or she may remain enrolled to complete the IEP and earn his or her high school diploma; however, the student will only be allowed to participate in one graduation ceremony. [See policy FMH(LEGAL)]

ARD committees for students with disabilities who receive special education will make instructional and assessment decisions for these students in accordance with state law and rules. A student who receives special education services may earn an endorsement under the foundation program. If the student's curriculum requirements for the endorsement were modified, the student's ARD committee will determine whether the modified curriculum is sufficiently rigorous for purposes of earning the endorsement. The ARD committee must also determine whether the student must perform satisfactorily on any end-of-course assessment instrument required to earn an endorsement.

## Graduation Activities

A student who has satisfactorily completed all coursework requirements for graduation but has failed to meet applicable state testing requirements shall be allowed to participate in commencement activities and ceremonies. However, participation in activities and ceremonies is not synonymous with graduating. Ultimately, the final awarding of a diploma will be contingent upon the student's completion of all applicable requirements for graduation. **(See also Students with Disabilities)** [See FMH(LOCAL)]

The district has the right to limit a student's participation in graduation activities for violating the district's Code of Conduct. Participation might include a speaking role, as established by district policy and procedures.

## Graduation Speakers

Certain graduating students will be given an opportunity to have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies.

A student must meet local eligibility criteria, which may include requirements related to student conduct, to have a speaking role. Students eligible for speaking roles will be notified by the principal and given an opportunity to volunteer.

[See FNA(LOCAL) and the Student Code of Conduct. For student speakers at other school events, see **Student Speakers**]

## **Graduation Expenses**

Because students and parents will incur expenses in order to participate in the traditions of graduation – such as the purchase of invitations, senior ring, cap and gown, and senior picture – both the student and parent should monitor progress toward completion of all requirements for graduation. The expenses often are incurred in the junior year or first semester of the senior year. [See **Student Fees**]

## **Scholarships and Grants**

Students who have a financial need according to federal criteria and who complete the foundation graduation program may be eligible under the TEXAS Grant Program and the Teach for Texas Grant Program for scholarships and grants toward tuition and fees to Texas public universities, community colleges, and technical schools, as well as to private institutions. Certain students who graduate early may also be eligible for the Texas First Scholarship Program.

Contact the school counselor for information about other scholarships and grants available to students.

## **Financial Aid Application Requirement**

Before graduating from high school, each student must complete and submit an application for financial aid for post-secondary education. Students must complete and submit either a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA).

Helpful College Readiness Resources are available by visiting the Counseling Department

<https://www.visd.net/page/college-knowledge>

A student is not required to complete and submit a FAFSA or TASFA if:

- The student's parent submits a form provided by the district indicating that the parent authorizes the student to opt out;
- A student who is 18 years of age or older or a legally independent minor submits a form provided by the district indicating that the student opts out; or
- A school counselor authorizes the student to opt out for good cause.

Please contact the school counselor for more information.

The College and Career Center will ensure that all eligible students complete the FAFSA, TASFA, or an opt out form.

To confirm that a student has completed and submitted a TASFA, the student must submit:

- A screenshot that includes the processed date field of the FAFSA ApplyTexas Counselor Suite;
- Notification, such as a copy of an email, from the United States Department of Education verifying completion of the FAFSA;
- A copy or screenshot of the FAFSA acknowledgment page;
- A screenshot of the TASFA submission acknowledgment page (from those institutions that offer an electronic form);

- An acknowledgment receipt from an institution of higher education (IHE); or
- A copy of a financial aid award letter from an IHE.

## **HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation**]

## **HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information**

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on previously provided written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to answer questions during the online registration process regarding the student's health and medical needs. Parents should keep emergency care information up to date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

### **Student Illness**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won't be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

A parent should contact the school nurse if a student has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

The district is required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or our local/regional health authority. The school nurse can provide information from DSHS on these notifiable conditions.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent/guardian. The student's absence will be excused for the remainder of the day. A written excuse is still required to be submitted by the parent/guardian for this day and any subsequent days missed due to illness. The written excuse should provide an explanation for the absence.

Contact the school nurse if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

### **Immunizations**

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained online at [Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunization](#) or by writing to the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is

seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Meningococcal
- Hepatitis A

The school nurse can provide information on immunization requirements. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. registered and licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or a member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a lifelong condition.

For information on immunization against bacterial meningitis and college enrollment and attendance, see **Bacterial Meningitis**

[See the DSHS website: [Texas School & Child Care Facility Immunization Requirements](#) and policy FFAB(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Lice (All Grade Levels)**

Head lice is very common among children. Although not an illness or a disease, it spreads easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, nap time, and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.

The district does not require or recommend that students be removed from school because of lice or nits.

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school nurse will contact the student's parent to discuss a treatment plan using an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student undergoes one treatment, the parent should contact the school nurse to discuss the treatment used. The nurse can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments, how best to get rid of lice, and how to prevent lice from returning.

The district will provide written or electronic notice to the parent of the child with lice and to the parent of each child assigned to the same classroom as the child with lice without identifying the student with lice.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the DSHS website [Managing Head Lice in School Settings and at Home](#).

[See policy FFAA for more information.]

## Medicine at School

If a student must take medication during school hours, the student's parent must provide the medication. All medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be kept in the nurse's office and be administered by the nurse or another authorized district employee. A student may be authorized to possess his or her own medication because of asthma or a severe allergy as described below or as otherwise allowed by law.

The district will not purchase nonprescription medication to give to a student.

In accordance with policy FFAC, authorized employees may administer:

- Prescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
- Prescription medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
- Nonprescription medication in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request. **Note:** Insect repellant is considered a nonprescription medication.
- Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.

At the elementary level, a student's teacher or other district personnel will apply sunscreen to the student's exposed skin if the student brings the sunscreen to school and asks for help applying it. A student at this level may apply his or her own sunscreen if the student is able to do so.

At the secondary level, a student may possess and apply sunscreen when necessary. If the student needs assistance with sunscreen application, please address the need with the school nurse.

Whether a student is at the elementary or secondary level, if sunscreen needs to be administered to treat any type of medical condition, this should be handled through communication with the school nurse so that the district is made aware of any safety and medical issues.

The nurse's office has the following over-the-counter medications that may be used on students for minor first aid. If you do not want these medications administered to your child, it is your responsibility to provide written notice to the campus nurse before school starts.

Antibiotic ointment (Triple Antibiotic ointment, Neosporin)	Oragel
Anti-itch gel/cream	Saline eye wash
Anti-fungal cream	Vitamin A&D ointment
Burn gel/spray	Vaseline
Contact Lens Solution	Visine
Isopropyl alcohol	

## Asthma and Severe Allergic Reactions

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her health-care provider and the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication.



If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parents should discuss this with the school nurse or principal

Care of the diabetic student requires a collaborative effort between the student, parent, physician, teacher and school nurse to develop a student's Individual Health Plan. Parents should inform the school principal and nurse that their child with diabetes is enrolling in school or that their child has been newly diagnosed with diabetes. They should provide a health care plan that has been prescribed and approved by the child's physician or health care team. In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or school-related events. The students and parents should see the school nurse or principal if the student has been prescribed diabetes medication for use during the school day. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL)]

## **Steroids**

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

Body building, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

## **Mental and Physical Health Support (All Grade Levels)**

The district has implemented programs to address the following mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse concerns:

- Mental health promotion and early intervention;
- Building skills to manage emotions, establish and maintain positive relationships, and engage in responsible decision-making;
- Substance abuse prevention and intervention;
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (interventions after a suicide in a community);
- Grief, trauma, and trauma-informed care;
- Positive behavior interventions and supports;
- Positive youth development; and
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climates.

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access *Texas Suicide Prevention* at <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in our area. You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. **Beginning July 16, 2022, you may call the new Lifeline by dialing 988.**

If a student has been hospitalized or placed in residential treatment for a mental health condition or substance abuse, the district has procedures to support the student's return to school. Please contact the district's mental health liaison for further information.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication that is intended to alter perception, emotion, mood, or behavior.

A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. [See policy FFEB for more information.]

Parents and students in need of assistance with physical and mental health concerns may contact the following campus resources:

CAMPUS	CAMPUS ADDRESS	PHONE	Campus Resource Contacts		Campus Role	Email	FULL/ PART TIME
Aloe Elementary	62 Chaparral, Victoria, TX 77905	361-788-9509	Crystal	January-Crain	Counselor	crystal.january-crain@visd.net	Full Time
			Valeria	Harasim	Nurse	valeria.harasim@visd.net	Full Time
Chandler Elementary	5105 Guy Grant Rd., Victoria TX 77904	361-788-9587	Katie	Gohlke	Counselor	katie.gohlke@visd.net	Full Time
			Rebecca	Hawk	Nurse	rebecca.hawk@visd.net	Full Time
Crain Elementary	2706 N. Azalea, Victoria TX 77901	361-573-7453	Nicole	Garza	Counselor	nicole.garza@visd.net	Full Time
			Mindy	Thompson	Nurse	mindy.thompson@visd.net	Full Time
DeLeon Elementary	1002 Santa Barbara, Victoria TX 77904	361-788-9553	Tamala	Franka	Counselor	tamala.franka@visd.net	Full Time
			Ursula	Bryan	Nurse	ursula.bryan@visd.net	Full Time
Dudley Elementary	3307 Callis St., Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9517			Counselor		Full Time
			Roxanna	McAdams	Nurse	roxanna.mcadams@visd.net	Full Time
Early Childhood Center at FW Gross	1208 S. Navarro St Victoria, TX 77901	361-788-2847	Amanda	Starnes	Nurse	amanda.starnes@visd.net	Full Time
Hopkins Elementary	110 Hopkins Rd., Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9527			Counselor		Full Time
			Fran	Flores	Nurse	francesse.flores@visd.net	Full Time
Mission Valley Elementary	12063 FM 236 (UMVR), Victoria TX 77905	361-788-9514			Counselor		Part Time
			Debbie	Hyak	Nurse	debbie.hyak@visd.net	Full Time
O'Connor Elementary	3402 Bobolink, Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9572	Russell	Stevens	Counselor	russell.stevens@visd.net	Full Time
			Carrie	Baccus	Nurse	carrie.baccus@visd.net	Full Time
Rowland Elementary	2706 Leary Lane, Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9549	Rebecca	Gonzales-McDonough	Counselor	rebecca.mcdonough@visd.net	Full Time
			Kelly	Wyatt	Nurse	kelly.wyatt@visd.net	Full Time
Schorlemmer Elementary	2564 Malette Dr., Victoria TX 77904	361-788-2860	Brittany	Braden	Counselor	brittany.braden@visd.net	Full Time
			Lisa	Pena	Nurse	lisa.pena@visd.net	Full Time
Shields Elementary	3400 Bluebonnet, Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9593	Alisha	Hernandez	Counselor	alisha.hernandez@visd.net	Full Time
			Sarah	West	Nurse	sarah.west@visd.net	Full Time



Smith Elementary	2901 Erwin, Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9605	Megan	Slovacek	Counselor	megan.slovacek@visd.net	Full Time
			Hope	Brown	Nurse	hope.brown@visd.net	Full Time
Torres Elementary	4208 Lone Tree Rd., Victoria TX 77901	361-788-2850	Kayla	Henery	Counselor	kayla.henery@visd.net	Full Time
					Nurse		
Vickers Elementary	708 Glasgow, Victoria TX 77904	361-788-9579	Sarina	Vasquez	Counselor	sarina.vasquez@visd.net	Full Time
			Tiffany	Juett	Nurse	tiffany.juett@visd.net	Full Time
Cade Middle School	611 West Tropical Dr., Victoria TX 77904	361-788-2840	Ramona	Alvarado	Counselor	ramona.alvarado@visd.net	Full Time
			Sylvia	Espinoza	Counselor	sylvia.espinoza@visd.net	Full Time
			Kelly	Rehak	Nurse	kelly.rehak@visd.net	Full Time
Howell Middle School	2502 Fannin, Victoria TX 77901	361-578-1561	Maria	Rico	Counselor	maria.rico@visd.net	Full Time
			Paula	Schroeder	Counselor	paula.schroeder@visd.net	Full Time
			Jessica	Lopez	Nurse	jessica.lopez@visd.net	Full Time
Patti Welder Middle School	1604 E. North St., Victoria TX 77901	361-575-4553	Monica	Hodge	Counselor	monica.hodge@visd.net	Full Time
			David	Sample	Counselor	john.sample@visd.net	Full Time
			Holly	Holland	Nurse	holly.holland@visd.net	Full Time
Stroman Middle School	1110 Sam Houston, Victoria TX 77901	361-578-2711	Christopher	Smith	Counselor	christopher.smith@visd.net	Full Time
					Counselor		Full Time
			Jessie	Cochrum	Nurse	jessie.cochrum@visd.net	Full Time
Victoria East High School	4103 Mockingbird Dr., Victoria TX 77904	361-788-2820	Natalie	Gerhardt	Counselor	natalie.gerhardt@visd.net	Full Time
			Samantha	Rodriguez	Counselor	samantha.rodriguez@visd.net	Full Time
			Kacey	Tupa	Counselor	kacey.tupa@visd.net	Full Time
			Heather	Williams	Counselor	heather.williams@visd.net	Full Time
			Laura	Miller	Nurse	laura.miller@visd.net	Full Time
			Faye	Tripp	Nurse	faye.tripp@visd.net	Full Time
Victoria West High School	307 W. Tropical Dr., Victoria TX 77904	361-788-2830	Dixie	Baker	Counselor	dixie.baker@visd.net	Full Time
			Sarah	Keen	Counselor	sarah.keen@visd.net	Full Time
					Counselor		Full Time
					Counselor		
			LeeAnn	Williams	Nurse	leeann.williams@visd.net	Full Time
			Lisa	Diaz	Nurse	lisa.diaz@visd.net	Full Time
VISD Success Academy Primary DAEP Secondary DAEP	3002 E. North St., Victoria TX 77901	361-788-9650	Naomi	Jacinto	Counselor	naomi.jacinto@visd.net	Full Time
			Juli	Wenske	Counselor	juli.debruin@visd.net	Full Time
			Veronica	Vargas	Nurse	veronica.vargas@visd.net	Full Time

## **Physical Activity Requirements for Students in Elementary and Middle School**

### ***Elementary School***

The district will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten–grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district’s elementary school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

### ***Middle School***

The district will ensure that students in middle or junior high school will engage in 30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity per day for at least four semesters, in accordance with policies at EHAB, EHAC, EHBG, and FFA.

For additional information on the district’s junior high and middle school student physical activity programs and requirements, please see the principal.

### ***Temporary Restriction from Participation in Physical Education***

Students who are temporarily restricted from participation in physical education will not actively participate in skill demonstration but will remain in class to learn the concepts of the lessons.

### **Physical Fitness Assessment (Grades 3–12)**

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of his or her child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting the campus principal.

## **Physical Examinations/Health Screenings**

### **Athletics Participation (Secondary Grade Levels Only)**

A student desiring to participate in the district’s UIL athletic program and certain extracurricular activities, shall submit a statement from a physician licensed to practice in the state indicating that the student has been examined and is physically able to participate in the relevant program. This includes:

- A district athletics program.
- District marching band.
- Any district extracurricular program identified by the superintendent.

Pre-participation Physical Examination - An annual physical examination signed by a physician, a physician assistant licensed by a State Board of Physician Assistant Examiners, or a registered nurse recognized as an advanced practice nurse by the Board of Nurse Examiners is required.

- Medical History Form - Each year prior to any practice or participation, a UIL medical history form signed by both student and a parent or guardian is required. A medical history form shall accompany each physical examination and shall be signed by both student and a parent or guardian.

Students should be aware of the rare possibility of sudden cardiac arrest, which in athletes is usually caused by a previously unsuspected heart disease or disorder. A student may request an

electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) to screen for such disorders, in addition to his or her required physical examination.

For more information, see the UIL's explanation of [sudden cardiac arrest](#).

## **Spinal Screening Program**

School-based spinal screening helps identify adolescents with abnormal spinal curvature and refer them for appropriate follow-up by their physician. Screening can detect scoliosis at an early stage, when the curve is mild and may go unnoticed. Early detection is key to controlling spinal deformities.

All students who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services criteria will be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. For information on spinal screening by an outside professional or exemption from spinal screening based on religious beliefs, see policy FFAA(LEGAL) or contact the superintendent.

Spinal screening is non-invasive and conducted following the most recent, nationally accepted and peer-reviewed standards for spinal screening.

## **Other Exams and Screenings**

Students are required to undergo a risk assessment for Type 2 diabetes at the same time the district screens students for hearing and vision issues, or for abnormal spinal curvatures. [Also see policy FFAA]

## **Special Health Concerns (All Grade Levels)**

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

Please see the district's website under Health Services for information regarding meningitis. <https://www.visd.net/page/district-health-resources>

Note: Entering college students must show, with limited exception, evidence of receiving a bacterial meningitis vaccination within the five-year period prior to enrolling in and taking courses at an institution of higher education. Please see the school nurse for more information, as this may affect a student who wishes to enroll in a dual credit course taken off campus.

### **Diabetes**

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. [See policy FFAF(LEGAL) for more information.]

### **Food Allergies**

Each school requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy. The Child Nutrition Department will need a doctor's note stating the allergen, foods to avoid and substitutions.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) "Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies

At-Risk for Anaphylaxis.” The district’s management plan addresses employee training, dealing with common food allergens, and specific strategies for dealing with students diagnosed with severe food allergies. When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, individual care plans will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment. The District’s food allergy management plan is available through the Office of the Health Services Coordinator at 361-788-9331. The complete text of the “Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis” can be found on the DSHS website at Allergies and Anaphylaxis. [See policy FFAF and **Celebrations**]

## **Seizures**

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the district before the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following a diagnosis of a seizure disorder for the student. For more information, contact the school nurse. [See “A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504”]

## **Tobacco and E-Cigarettes Prohibited**

Students are prohibited from possessing or using any type of tobacco product, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), or any other electronic vaporizing device, while on school property at any time or while attending an off-campus school-related activity.

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of all tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or any other electronic vaporizing device, by students and all others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policies at FNCD and GKA]

## **OTHER HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

### **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and Student Wellness**

During the preceding school year, the district’s School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) held four meetings. Additional information regarding the district’s SHAC is available from the VISD website. You may also contact the VISD Health Services Coordinator for more information.

The duties of the SHAC include making recommendations regarding physical and mental health curriculum; developing strategies for integrating curriculum into a coordinated school health program encompassing issues such as school health services, counseling Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and assisting the district in aligning local community values with health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, and other wellness issues, a safe and healthy school environment, recess recommendations, improving student fitness, mental health concerns, substance abuse prevention and employee wellness; and making recommendations for increasing parents’ awareness of warning signs of suicide and mental health risks and community mental health and suicide prevention services.

Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings will be posted at each campus administrative office at least 72 hours before the meeting. Notification of upcoming SHAC meetings, meeting minutes, and a recording of each meeting will be posted on the district website at <https://www.visd.net/page/shac>

To encourage healthy habits in our students, the district has developed a board-adopted wellness policy at FFA(LOCAL) and corresponding plans and procedures to implement it. For questions about the

content or implementation of the district's wellness policy and plan, please contact the VISD Health Services Director.

[See **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction** on page 3 and policies BDF and EHAA. for more information.]

### **Policies and Procedures that Promote Student Physical and Mental Health (All Grade Levels)**

The district has adopted board policies that promote student physical and mental health. (LOCAL) policies on the topics below can be found in the district's website under Policy and Regulations.

- Food and nutrition management: CO, COA, COB
- Wellness and Health Services: FFA
- Physical Examinations: FFAA
- Immunizations: FFAB
- Medical Treatment: FFAC
- Communicable Diseases: FFAD
- School-Based Health Centers: FFAE
- Care Plans: FFAF
- Crisis Intervention: FFB
- Trauma-informed Care: FFBA
- Student Support Services: FFC
- Student Safety: FFF
- Child Abuse and Neglect: FFG
- Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: FFH
- Freedom from Bullying: FFI

In addition, the District Improvement Plan details the district's strategies to improve student performance through evidence-based practices that address physical and mental health. The district has developed administrative procedures as necessary to implement the above policies and plans.

For further information regarding these procedures and access to the District Improvement Plan, please visit: [VISD Improvement Plans](#)

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines containing non-compliant foods/beverages. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines, contact the Director of Child Nutrition Services at 361-788-9235. [See policies at CO and FFA]

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district works diligently to maintain compliance with federal and state law governing asbestos in school buildings. A copy of the district's Asbestos Management Plan is available in the Maintenance Department offices. If you have any questions or would like to examine the district's plan in more detail, please contact the Director of Maintenance, the district's designated asbestos coordinator, at 361-575-6408.

## **Pest Management Plan**

The district is required to follow integrated pest management (IPM) procedures to control pests on school grounds. Although the district strives to use the safest and most effective methods to manage pests, including a variety of non-chemical control measures, periodic indoor and outdoor pesticide use is sometimes necessary to maintain adequate pest control and ensure a safe, pest-free school environment.

All pesticides used are registered for their intended use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are applied only by certified pesticide applicators. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before indoor application. All outdoor applications will be posted at the time of treatment, and signs will remain until it is safe to enter the area. Parents who have further questions or who want to be notified of the times and types of applications prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the Maintenance Department at 361-575-6408.

## **HOMEWORK**

At the discretion of the teacher, homework may be assigned. The homework may consist of completing work not finished at school, studying for tests, reading or practicing skills which were taught at school. Homework provides opportunities for you to see what your child is learning and promotes the development of good study habits.

## **LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**

It is the practice of Victoria I.S.D. to provide timely, meaningful access for speakers of all languages to all district programs and activities when requested. The full Plan is available on the VISD home page at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net) or a hard copy can be obtained from the Bilingual or State & Federal Programs Departments.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

### **Questioning of Students**

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.

### **Students Taken in Custody**

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs for comparison in an investigation.

- By a law enforcement officer to obtain fingerprints or photographs to establish a student's identity, where the child may have engaged in conduct indicating a need for supervision, such as running away.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services (CPS), Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.
- To comply with a properly issued directive from a juvenile court to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

## Notification of Law Violations

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been taken into custody, arrested, or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who is thought to have committed certain offenses or who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated for delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.
- All appropriate district personnel regarding a student who is required to register as a sex offender.

[For further information, see policy FL(LEGAL)]

## LEAVING CAMPUS

Student attendance is crucial to learning. We ask that appointments be scheduled outside of school hours as reasonably possible. Also note that picking up a student early on a regular basis result in missed opportunities for learning. Except for extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the school day.

Students are not authorized to leave campus during regular school hours for any reason, except with the permission of the principal or designee. Students who leave campus in violation of these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

State rules require that parental consent be obtained before any student is allowed to leave campus for any part of the school day. The district has put the following procedures in place in order to document parental consent:

- For students in elementary school, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. The parent or other adult must be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, the district does not allow visitors to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student returns to campus the same day, the parent or authorized adult must sign the student back in through the main office upon the student's return.



Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

- For middle school students, a parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out. The adult should be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will then call for the student or collect the student and bring him or her to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, the district does not allow visitors to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student's parent authorizes the student to leave campus unaccompanied, the parent must submit a note in advance of the absence no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus (parent's note must include the parent's phone number). The principal or designee will need to review the parent's note prior to student release. If the student returns to campus the same day, the student must check into the office before returning to class. The parent or authorized adult is encouraged to accompany the student back in through the main office upon the student's return. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.
- For students in high school, a similar process is followed. A parent or otherwise authorized adult must come to the office and sign the student out unless the student is at least 18 years of age or an emancipated minor. The adult should be prepared to show identification. Once an identity is verified, a campus representative will call for the student or collect the student and bring the student to the office. For safety purposes and stability of the learning environment, the district does not allow visitors to go to the classroom or other area unescorted to pick up the student. If the student's parent authorizes the student to leave campus unaccompanied, the parent must submit a written note in advance of the absence no later than two hours prior to the student's need to leave campus (parent's note must include the parent's phone number). The principal or designee will need to review the parent's note prior to student release. A phone call received from the parent will be accepted, but the school may ultimately require a note to be submitted for documentation purposes. Once the office has received information that the student's parent consents to the student leaving campus, a pass will be issued to the student to hand to his or her teacher with the necessary information. The student must sign out through the main office and sign in upon his or her return if the student returns the same day. If a student is 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor, the student may produce a note on his or her own behalf. Documentation regarding the reason for the absence will also be required.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse or other district personnel determines that the student should go home, the nurse will contact the student's parent and document the parent's wishes regarding release from school. Unless directed by the parent to release the student unaccompanied, the parent or other authorized adult must follow the sign-out procedures as listed above. If a student is allowed to leave campus by himself or herself, as permitted by the student's parent, or if the student is age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the nurse will document the time of day the student was released. Under no circumstances will a student in elementary be released unless accompanied by a parent or adult authorized by the parent.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

### **Makeup Work Because of Absence**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.



A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time, including absences for extracurricular activities, so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school. With limited exceptions, all absences count for the 90 percent threshold set in state law regarding attendance for credit or final grade. [See **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade**]

A student involved in an extracurricular activity must notify his or her teachers ahead of time about any absences.

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with timelines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

### **DAEP Makeup Work**

A high school student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The district may provide the opportunity to complete the course through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA(LEGAL).]

### **In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) Makeup Work (all grade levels)**

#### ***Completion of Course Work***

While a student is in ISS or OSS, the district will provide the student with all course work for the student's foundation curriculum classes that the student misses as a result of the suspension.

#### ***Completion of Courses***

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, another distance learning option, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FO(LEGAL)]

## **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Working Together**

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement and engagement in this partnership may include:

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child daily to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects and comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district.
- Discussing with the school counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.

- Reviewing the requirements and options for graduation with your child in middle school and again while your child is enrolled in high school.
- Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, school counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences**]
- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policy GKG and contact your school principal]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO), booster clubs, and community benefit clubs.
- Serving as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. [For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact the school principal or the Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability at 361-788-2896]
- Serving on the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction, human sexuality instruction, instruction on prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, and other wellness issues

[See policies at BDF, EHAA, FFA, and information in this handbook at **School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)**]

- Being aware of the school's ongoing bullying and harassment prevention efforts.
- Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child's emotional or mental well-being.
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies at BE and BED for more information]

## **PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE**

Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

[See **Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags**]

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001. [See policy EC for more information]

## **PRAYER**

Each student has a right to pray individually, voluntarily, and silently or to meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or proficiency. In making promotion decisions, the district will consider:

- Teacher recommendation,
- Grades,
- Scores on criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessments, and
- Any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards and meet state attendance requirements.

[See also **Attendance for Credit or Final Grade**]

### **Prekindergarten, Kindergarten-Grade 3**

A parent may request in writing that a student repeat prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3. Before granting the request, the district may convene a retention committee to meet and discuss the request and will invite the parent to participate.

### **Elementary and Middle School Grade Levels**

In Kindergarten, students shall be evaluated on a list of skills based on the essential knowledge and skills for the grade level. Promotion shall be based on significant mastery of skills as determined by the student's teacher. A conference will be held with the parent if a decision is made to retain the student.

In Grades 1-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in reading/language arts, a grade of 70 or above in mathematics, and a grade of 70 or above in either science or social studies.

### **High School Grade Levels**

To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level standards.

In grades 9-12, grade level advancement is based on the number of credits earned by the student. Grade level classification:

- Grade 9: 0–5.5 credits
- Grade 10: 6–11.5 credits
- Grade 11: 12–17.5 credits
- Grade 12: 18 or more credits

Students will also have multiple opportunities to retake EOC assessments.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

[See **Leaving Campus**]

### **REMOTE INSTRUCTION**

If, at any time, the district offers remote learning instruction, all district policies, procedures, guidelines, rules, and other expectations of student behavior will be enforced as applicable in a remote or virtual learning environment.

### **REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Written reports of absences and student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every nine weeks for elementary, middle, and high schools.

At campus-specified points during each grading period, parents are notified if the student's grade average is near or below 70 or below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a grade of less than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, the parents are asked to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade below 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school. Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL) and **Grading Guidelines**]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG(LOCAL).

## **RETALIATION**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation**]

## **SAFETY**

Student safety on campus, at school-related events, and on district vehicles is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or others at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, campus behavior coordinator, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.

A student may make an anonymous report about safety concerns by completing the VISD [Incident Reporting Form](#) found on the district website.

## **Accident Insurance**

Under state law, the district cannot pay for medical expenses associated with a student's injury or damage to a student's property. The district does make available through an approved vendor, however, an optional, low-cost accident insurance program for students to assist parents in meeting medical expenses. Information is available on the VISD website (under Parent Link). A parent who desires coverage for his or her child will be responsible for paying insurance premiums and for submitting claims to the insurance company directly.

The Victoria ISD, by Board action, purchases limited insurance for students who participate in interscholastic competition, against bodily injury sustained while training for or engaging in such competition.

## **Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies**

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in emergency preparedness drills. When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Students in grades 7–12 will annually be offered instruction on the use of bleeding control stations to respond to traumatic injury. For more information, see [Homeland Security's Stop the Bleed](#) and [Stop the Bleed Texas](#).

### ***Lockdown Drills***

Students may participate in a “lockdown” drill periodically. School officials will use the public address system to order the campus into a lockdown status. All students must remain in the classroom. Students in hallways should immediately go into the nearest available classroom and remain there until notified that the lockdown is completed. During such a drill, access of parents and other members of the public to school grounds will be substantially limited.

### ***Shelter in Place***

Schools may conduct periodic “Shelter in Place” drills. During such a drill, access of parents and other members of the public to school grounds will be substantially limited.

## **Emergency Medical Treatment and Information Safeguards**

All parents are asked each year to complete a medical care authorization form, providing written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment and information about allergies to medications or drugs. Parents should contact the school nurse to update emergency care information (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.).

The district may consent to medical treatment, which includes dental treatment, if necessary, for a student if:

- The district has received written authorization from a person having the right to consent;
- That person cannot be contacted; and
- That person has not given the district actual notice to the contrary.

The emergency care authorization form will be used by the district when a student’s parent or authorized designee cannot be contacted. A student may provide consent if authorized by law or court order.

Regardless of parental authorization for the district to consent to medical treatment, district employees will contact emergency medical services to provide emergency care when required by law or when deemed necessary, such as to avoid a life-threatening situation.

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

Each year, parents are asked to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat. If the campus must close, delay opening or restrict access to the building because of an emergency, the district will alert the parents through the emergency contact system known as EduLink. Also, notifications will be made through the news media and on the VISD website. Those notifications will include any special instructions for parents and guardians.

Occasionally, weather conditions will prompt safety concerns for students and staff. Each situation is taken on a case-by-case basis. Schools may, on occasion, start late or dismiss early in anticipation of weather and travel conditions. In some instances, when weather conditions are deemed too dangerous to allow for the release of students, students may be held in class after the end of the school day until

the immediate danger is passed. The safety of students and staff is the primary concern in all situations. The Superintendent has the authority to dismiss school for a part of a day or for longer periods of time, if necessary, in the event of unusual or emergency situations. Notification of change in the normal school day will be provided through local media and, as possible, through direct contact with parents. Because one method of emergency contact with parents is through a direct calling system, it is critically important to maintain accurate telephone contact information in the school office. If the parent's telephone number changes, please notify the school immediately. State law requires parents to update contact information within two weeks after the date the information changes.  
[See **Communications –Automated**]

## **SCHOOL FACILITIES**

### **Use by Students Before and After School**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing an activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, unless a student is involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher or other authorized employee or adult, or unless students are granted permission to remain on campus in accordance with Policy FNAB, students should leave campus immediately. Students waiting for transportation should wait in the designated area.

### **Conduct Before and After School**

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. Students must follow the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the Student Code of Conduct or any stricter standards of behavior established by the sponsor for extracurricular participants.

### **Use of Hallways During Class Time**

Loitering or standing in the hallway during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Food and Nutrition Services (All Grade Levels)**

The district participates in the Community Eligibility Program at the Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade and DAEP/Credit Recovery Programs to provide free breakfast and lunch as well as CACFP At Risk after school dinner meals at some campuses. Completing income surveys will assist your child's campus in attaining Title funds. These programs allow the district to offer students nutritionally balanced meals daily in accordance with standards set forth in state and federal law. **Please visit the following link to get started if your child will be enrolled at VISD Success Academy, Primary DAEP, Secondary DAEP, Early Childhood Center at F.W. Gross, or an elementary campus.**

**Income Survey** <https://family.titank12.com/income-form/new?identifier=5B49CV>

For students attending Victoria East or Victoria West High School, parents/guardians will need to fill out a free and reduced-price meal application. The results from these applications will assist your child's campus with title fund distribution and may qualify your family for future EBT benefits.



Information about a student's participation is confidential. The district may share information such as a student's name and eligibility status to help enroll eligible children in Medicaid or the state children's health insurance program (CHIP) unless the student's parent notifies the district that a student's information should not be disclosed. Participating students will be offered the same meal options as their peers and will not be treated differently from their peers.

Qualification information for the free or reduced priced meals is available in the meal application packet provided to parents, online meal applications are also available on the VISD website under the "Child Nutrition" department link as well as through the Titan Family Portal. The Titan Family Portal is mobile device friendly. State and federal law as well as board-adopted policies, define when, where, and by whom competitive foods, which are foods not sold as part of the regular meal program, can be served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information, see policy CO(LEGAL) and FFA(LOCAL)]

**Meal Application** <https://family.titank12.com/application/new?identifier=5B49CV>

Students will be allowed to purchase a la carte items at all campuses. Parents may deposit money into their student(s) account(s) via the Titan Family Portal at [www.Family.TitanK12.com](http://www.Family.TitanK12.com) or by sending a check. Cash is accepted at the register. For students paying with cash at the point of service, change due will be credited to their account unless requested. No credit cards are allowed at this time. Funds are deposited into a child's account and withdrawn electronically as the child makes purchases in the cafeteria. The Titan Family Portal website is not sponsored by Victoria ISD and Victoria ISD does not receive any portion of the user fees charged on the site.

Parents are also encouraged to monitor their child's meal account using the Titan Family Portal website. Parents may also set up notifications at no charge when their child's account balance falls to a specified level. When a student's meal account is depleted, the Family Portal will notify the parent or a note will be sent home with your child.

Victoria Independent School District 2022-2023 school meal fees are as follows:

Student Meals- Breakfast and Lunch- Free

Student After School Meals- Free

Adults/Guests/Second Breakfast \$4.00

Adults/Guests/Second Lunch \$5.00

Traditional and a la carte menus are on the VISD website as well as the nutritional analysis of the school breakfast and lunch items.

## **Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. Each campus establishes hours of operation for the library. Campus library hours and procedures are posted at the beginning of the school year.

## **Meetings of Non-Curriculum-Related Groups**

Student-organized, student-led non-curriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB(LOCAL).

## **SCHOOL-SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS (All Grade Levels)**

The district periodically takes students on field trips for educational purposes. A parent must provide permission for a student to participate in a field trip. The district may ask the parent to provide



information about a student's medical provider and insurance coverage and may also ask the parent to sign a waiver allowing for emergency medical treatment in the case of a student accident or illness during the field trip. The district may require a fee for student participation in a field trip that is not required as part of a basic educational program or course to cover expenses such as transportation, admission, and meals; however, a student will not be denied participation because of financial need. The district is not responsible for refunding fees paid directly to a third-party vendor.

## **SEARCHES**

### **District Property**

Desks, lockers, district-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the district and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. District property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in district property. Students are responsible for any item – found in district property provided to the student – that is prohibited by law, district policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Searches in General**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may occasionally conduct searches. District officials may conduct searches of students, their belongings, and their vehicles in accordance with law and district policy. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion, voluntary consent, or pursuant to district policy providing for suspicionless security procedures, including the use of metal detectors. In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on district property. If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, a district official may conduct a search in accordance with law and district regulations.

### **Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices**

Use of district-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the district.

[See policy CQ for more information]

Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices will be conducted in accordance with law, and the device may be confiscated in order to perform a lawful search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

[See policy FNF(LEGAL) and **Electronic Devices and Technology Resources** for more information]

### **Vehicles on Campus**

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle parked on district property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See the Student Code of Conduct]

Vehicles parked on district property are under the jurisdiction of the district. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parent will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the district will turn the matter over to law enforcement. The district may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

## **Trained Dogs**

The district will use trained dogs to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs will not be announced in advance. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by district officials.

## **Metal Detectors**

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL)]

## **Drug Testing**

The Board of Trustees promotes the health and safety of students and prohibits illegal drug use and abuse. Procedures for drug testing of students in extracurricular activities and for students to receive school parking privileges have been adopted. Parents of students in Grades 7-12 may also request that their child be voluntarily included in the random drug testing program. [See Policy FNF(LOCAL)]

[For further information, see policy FNF(LOCAL); Also see **Steroids**]

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

[See **Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, Hazing and Retaliation**]

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, students who are homeless, bilingual students, migrant students, English learners, students diagnosed with dyslexia, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the school counselor.

A student who has or is at risk for dyslexia or a related reading difficulty is eligible to participate in the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's [Talking Book Program](#), which provides audiobooks free of charge to qualifying Texans with visual, physical, or reading disabilities.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

### **Secondary Grade Levels**

#### **SAT/ACT (Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Test)**

Many colleges require either the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. Students are encouraged to talk with the school counselor early during their junior year to determine the appropriate exam to take; these exams are usually taken at the end of the junior year. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and ACT-Aspire are the corresponding preparatory and readiness assessments for the SAT and ACT, and more information can be obtained on these assessments from the school counselor.

Note: Participation in these assessments may qualify a student to receive a performance acknowledgment on his or her transcript under the foundation graduation program and may qualify as a substitute for an end-of-course state testing requirement in certain circumstances. However, a student will still be required to participate in federal testing requirements. A student's performance at a certain level on the SAT or ACT also makes the student eligible for automatic admission to a Texas public institution of higher education.

### ***TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Assessment***

Prior to enrollment in a Texas public college or university, most students must take a standardized test called the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. The purpose of the TSI assessment is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills first-year students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges and universities. This assessment may be required before a student enrolls in a dual credit course offered through the district as well. Achieving certain benchmark scores on this assessment for college readiness may also waive certain end-of-course state assessment requirements in limited circumstances.

### **STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)**

#### ***Grades 3–8***

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels are required to take the state assessment, called STAAR, in the following subjects:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3 – 8
- Reading Language Arts, annually in grades 3 – 8
- Science in grades 5 and 8
- Social Studies in grade 8

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

STAAR Spanish is available for eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

#### ***Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on STAAR Reading Language Arts or Math***

If a student in grades 3–8 does not perform satisfactorily on the state assessment, the district will provide accelerated instruction for the student. A student who does not attend accelerated instruction may violate school attendance requirements.

For a student who does not perform satisfactorily on the math or reading language arts assessment in grades 3, 5, or 8, the district will establish an accelerated learning committee (ALC), which includes the student's parent, to develop an educational plan for accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the conclusion of the next school year. The district will then document the educational plan in writing and provide a copy to the student's parent. In the event a parent is unable to attend the designated meeting, a copy of the ALC Committee's educational plan for accelerated instruction will be provided.

The parent of a student in grades 3, 5, or 8 who fails to perform satisfactorily on the math or reading language arts assessment may:

- Request that the district consider assigning the student to a particular classroom teacher in the applicable subject area, if more than one classroom teacher is available.
- File a grievance or complaint regarding the content or implementation of the ALC's educational plan. See Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels) on page 28 and FNG(LOCAL).

#### ***Standardized Testing for a Student Enrolled Above Grade Level***

If a student in grades 3–8 is enrolled in a class or course intended for students above his or her current grade level in which the student will be administered a state-mandated assessment, the student will be required to take an applicable state-mandated assessment only for the course in which he or she is enrolled, unless otherwise required to do so by federal law.

A student in grades 3–8 shall be assessed at least once in high school with the ACT or the SAT if the student completes the high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics, reading language arts, or science prior to high school.

### ***Standardized Testing for a Student in Special Programs***

Certain students—some with disabilities and some classified as English learners—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, school counselor, or special education director.

### ***Personal Graduation Plans - Middle School Students***

For a middle school student who does not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated examination, a school official will prepare a personal graduation plan (PGP).

School officials will also develop a PGP for a middle school student who is determined by the district to be unlikely to earn a high school diploma within five years of high school enrollment. The plan will, among other items;

- Identify the student's educational goals,
- Address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and
- Outline an intensive instruction program for the student.

[See the school counselor and policy EIF(LEGAL) for more information.]

For a student receiving special education services, the student's IEP may serve as the student's PGP and would therefore be developed by the student's ARD committee.

[See **Personal Graduation Plans** on page 47 for information related to the development of personal graduation plans for high school students.]

### ***High School Courses End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments***

STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments are administered for the following courses:

- Algebra I
- English I and English II
- Biology
- U.S. History

Satisfactory performance on the applicable assessments is required for graduation, unless waived or substituted as allowed by state law and rules.

There are three testing windows during the year in which a student may take an EOC assessment. The windows occur in the fall, spring, and summer months. If a student does not meet satisfactory performance, the student will have opportunities to retake the assessment.

STAAR Alternate 2 is available for eligible students receiving special education services who meet certain criteria established by the state as determined by the student's ARD committee.

An admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee for a student receiving special education services will determine whether successful performance on the EOC assessments will be required for graduation within the parameters identified in state rules and the student's personal graduation plan (PGP).

[See **Graduation** on page 46.]

### ***Failure to Perform Satisfactorily on an EOC***

If a student does not perform satisfactorily on an EOC, the district will provide accelerated instruction. Failure of a student to attend accelerated instruction may result in violations of required school attendance.

### **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE**

In an effort to provide educational stability, the district will assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (temporary or permanent custody of the state, sometimes referred to as substitute care) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district. Please contact the district's foster care liaison, Yvonne Rossman, at the VISD Connections Office at 361-788-9909 with any questions. [See **Students in the Conservatorship of the State (Foster Care)** for more information]

### **STUDENTS WHO ARE HOMELESS**

A parent is encouraged to inform the district if his or her child is experiencing homelessness. District staff can share resources with you that may be able to assist you and your family. For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Homeless Liaison, Yvonne Rossman, at the VISD Connections Office at 361-788-9909.

### **STUDENT SPEAKERS**

The district provides students the opportunity to make introductory comments at some school events as provided in Policy FNA(LOCAL). Eligibility guidelines are set forth in this policy. If a student meets the eligibility criteria and wishes to introduce one of the school events listed above, the student should submit his or her name in accordance with policy FNA(LOCAL). [See also **Graduation Speakers**]

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

If you are worried that your child may be using or is in danger of experimenting, using, or abusing illegal drugs or other prohibited substances, please contact the school counselor. The school counselor can provide you with a list of community resources that may be of assistance to you. The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) maintains information regarding children's mental health and substance abuse intervention services on its website at Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

### **SUICIDE AWARENESS AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

The district is committed to partnering with parents to support the healthy mental, emotional, and behavioral development of its students. If you are concerned about your child, please access *Texas Suicide Prevention* at <http://www.texassuicideprevention.org> or contact the school counselor for more information related to suicide prevention services available in our area. You may also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Summer school work is highly concentrated and, once enrolled, attendance is mandatory. A summer school student must attend at least 90% of the program days and meet the academic proficiency standards of the course or grade level. Disruption of class or violations of school rules will not be tolerated and will result in loss of credit and tuition. Students shall be awarded credit for courses begun and successfully completed during the summer session.

## **Bilingual/ESL Summer School (Grades K-1)**

A bilingual/ESL summer school is offered by the District for students who need additional assistance with the English language. Students must be in kindergarten or first grade to qualify. Parents of students who would benefit should contact their school office for an application or the Bilingual Office at 788-9269 for more information.

## **TARDIES**

Tardiness is a disruption to the learning process. Students who are frequently tardy to a class or the class day may face disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, lunch and/or after school detention or given another appropriate consequence. Parents will be provided with notification when a student has excessive tardiness. Appropriate conferences with school personnel may be scheduled. Failure to successfully address the issue may result in referrals to outside agencies. Written documentation must be submitted by the parent to the school for consideration to be given regarding whether or not a tardy will be excused. Only the campus principal or designee may excuse a tardy. Students in grades 6-12 who, because of their tardiness, have missed a significant portion of the class period, will be counted as absent.

## **TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT, AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Instructional materials are any resources used in classroom instruction as part of the required curriculum, such as textbooks, workbooks, computer software, or online services. The district selects instructional materials in accordance with state law and policy EFA. The district provides approved instructional materials to students free of charge for each subject or class. Students must treat instructional materials with care, as directed by the teacher.

If a student needs a graphing calculator for a course and the district does not provide one, the student may use a calculator application with graphing capabilities on a phone, laptop, tablet, or other computing device. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or the damage paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided the necessary instructional resources and equipment for use at school during the school day. For information on library books and other resources students may access voluntarily, see Library (All Grade Levels).

## **TRANSFERS**

The principal is authorized to transfer a student from one classroom to another. The superintendent or designee is authorized to investigate and approve transfers between schools under FBD-R. Students are expected to attend school based upon the attendance zone determined by the place of residence of the parent or legal guardian. There are **limited** reasons for why a transfer to a different campus will be considered. Before applying for a transfer, read FDB-R to see if you qualify. Some of those reasons are based on law. Other reasons are based on special situations with extenuating circumstances. Parents who are requesting a transfer should complete the VISD Transfer Application Process. Applications for transfers are accepted the first 10 business days of May. Applications may or may not be considered if submitted after the 10<sup>th</sup> business day of May. Applications and other transfer information are posted on the VISD website during this time frame. Specialized applications for transfers are available by contacting the Office of Student Services at 361-788-9250. For more information, refer to link FDB-R

[VISD Transfer Regulation FBD-R](#)



[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments; Students Who Receive Special Education or Section 504 Services with other School-Aged Children in the Home; and Bullying** for other transfer options]

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. As approved by the principal, a coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity may establish procedures related to making an exception to this requirement when a parent requests that the student be released to the parent or to another adult designated by the parent.

### **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

Victoria ISD provides transportation at no cost for any student who lives more than 2 miles away from his/her school, for any student who is homeless, or for which there is a certified hazardous situation noted in compliance with TEC, Section 42.155. Please visit the VUSD website for the identified areas where hazardous traffic conditions exist for students who live within two miles of the campus. Because students in these areas might encounter hazardous traffic conditions the district may provide transportation to these students. See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP). We request that all parents register their school bus eligible students for transportation prior to the start of school for accurate busing information.

The Victoria ISD “three tier transportation system” consists of staggered start and dismissal times at each elementary, middle, and high school to serve the maximum number of students possible per bus.

- Parents are required to submit the Application for School Transportation Card to the school bus driver to receive school bus service for their child.
- Parents are to notify the school office of any change of address for transportation arrangements to be established. Allow for up to 3 school days for transportation to begin.

In the event a student has not ridden the school bus for 3 consecutive days, bus service to their designated stop will be terminated until the Transportation Office receives notice from the parent to reinstate bus service.

Students are not permitted to have “fluctuating schedules.” Students will not be permitted to have more than one pick-up or drop-off location. This is a protection in the interest of the safety of the student. For the safety of the operator of the vehicle and all passengers, students must board buses or other vehicles only at authorized stops, and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

### **Transportation Routes, Student Pick-up, and Delivery**

- Students are required to show ID if asked to do so.
- Students will be picked up and dropped off at a designated stop in their neighborhood.
- Parents assume the responsibility for their students traveling to and from home to the bus stop.
- Notes will **NOT** be accepted by the driver for any student to go anywhere other than the previously designated stop.

A parent may designate a certified child-care facility or grandparent’s residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be on an approved route, at a previously established stop. Certified child-care facilities must show proof that the facility is a registered, licensed, or certified daycare. Students going to daycare facilities will be delivered to the front door of the facility with the exception of facilities that do not allow the school bus easy access.



In the event there is not an adult at a bus stop to meet a young child, the driver will continue the route until all the other students have been delivered. Contact will be made with the parent by phone informing the parent that the student can be picked up at the Transportation Facility at 908 N. Laurent. When arriving at the Transportation Department, the parent must be prepared to show identification to pick up the student. For information on bus routes and stop locations, call the Transportation Department at 361-578-1538.

### **Information on Bus Routes and Bus Stop Locations**

Go to [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net), click on Departments, then click on the Transportation Department. Next, click on Transfinder, enter your address information, and select the campus your student will be attending. If you are bus-eligible, busing information will be displayed for your student. If no information is displayed or if you have any questions, please contact the Transportation Department at 361-578-1538.

### **Student Conduct on Buses and Other School Transportation**

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that transportation is provided safely and that buses remain in good condition. When riding in district vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct.

#### ***Students at the bus stop:***

- Should be at the designated bus stop **five** minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- Must be aware of and stay out of the “Danger Zone” areas around the school bus. The “Danger Zone” is a 10-foot area around the bus on all sides. Students waiting to get on the bus should stay far enough away from the bus so the student can clearly see the bus driver’s face. If a student cannot see the driver, the driver cannot see the student.

#### ***Students boarding and riding the school bus:***

- Must refrain from pushing or horsing around while getting on or off the bus.
- Must follow the driver’s directions at all times.
- Must go directly to their assigned seat.
- Must use a hearing device (headphones) when using electronic devices while riding the school bus i.e. cell phones, radios, games, etc.
- Must never throw or pass objects to anyone inside or outside the bus.
- Must enter the bus in an orderly manner at the designated stop.
- Must not allow large objects (like backpacks, musical instruments, or athletic equipment) to block the aisles or emergency exits.
- Must remain seated and face forward.
- Must never stick their head, hands, arms or objects through the windows.
- Must not damage or vandalize the school bus or its equipment.
- Must not possess or use any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes in any district vehicle.
- Must fasten the seat belt, if available.

#### ***Students exiting the school bus:***

- Must refrain from pushing or horsing around while exiting the bus.
- Must move out of and away from the bus as soon as departing the bus.
- Must wait for the driver’s signal when exiting the bus before crossing in front of it.

Students are encouraged to report nuisance or bullying behaviors that occur at bus stops and on the bus. Reports should be made to the driver or by utilizing the Incident Reporting Form available at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net) and in school offices.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct; the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended, or revoked.

## **Special Needs Transportation**

Special arrangements may be made for students with special needs to ride to and from school each day. More information on the services offered is available by contacting the school or the Office of Special Services at 361-576-3131.

- Failure to ride for three (3) consecutive days without prior parental notice to the Transportation Department Office will result in termination of bus service until Special Needs Routing is contacted to reinstate bus service.
- The parent of a Special Needs student should be at home at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled drop off time for the child. The parent or guardian is expected to meet the child at the curb to allow the Driver or Monitor to transfer the child's custody and responsibility.

## **UNCLAIMED PROPERTY**

Some items brought to school may be deemed disruptive or pose safety concerns as determined by campus administration and may be confiscated by school staff. Found or confiscated items held by the campus or district will become the property of the school district if unclaimed by the last day of the school year. This includes, but is not limited to, toys, electronic devices, student clothing, school supplies, and personal property brought to the school in violation of school policies or left by the student. All student medication not picked up by the parent or guardian at the end of the school year will be destroyed.

## **VANDALISM**

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended – both this year and for years to come – littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **VIDEO CAMERAS**

For safety purposes, the district uses video and audio recording equipment to monitor student behavior, including on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. Campus Administration will review the video and audio recordings as needed and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. In accordance with state law, a parent of a student who receives special education services, a staff member (as this term is defined by law), a principal or assistant principal, or the board, may make a written request for the district to place video and audio recording equipment in certain self-contained special education classrooms. The district will provide notice to you before placing a video camera in a classroom or other setting in which your child receives special education services. For more information or to request the installation and operation of this equipment, contact the principal directly. [See EHBAF(LOCAL)]

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors **must** first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable district policies and procedures. When arriving on campus, all parents and other visitors should be prepared to show identification.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of

instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor's arrival, the individual must check in at the main office first.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

The district may invite representatives from patriotic societies listed in Title 36 of the United States Code to present information to interested students about membership in the society.

## **UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS**

In accordance with Education Code 37.105, a school administrator, school resource officer (SRO), or district police officer has the authority to refuse entry or eject a person from district property if the person refuses to leave peaceably on request and:

- The person poses a substantial risk of harm to any person; or
- The person behaves in a manner that is inappropriate for a school setting and the person persists in the behavior after being given a verbal warning that the behavior is inappropriate and may result in refusal of entry or ejection.

Appeals regarding refusal of entry or ejection from district property may be filed in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) or GF(LOCAL). [See also Student Code of Conduct]

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers in schools are welcomed. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the school office for more information and complete the online volunteer application. Background checks are conducted prior to allowing a volunteer to begin service. There is no charge to a volunteer for the background check.

## **VOTER REGISTRATION**

A student who is eligible to vote in any local, state, or federal election may obtain a voter registration application at the main campus office.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL**

A student under age 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent/guardian. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book and equipment clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the school counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

A student who is 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor may withdraw without parental signature. In some cases, the parent/guardian who enrolled the student may still be contacted regarding the student's request to withdraw.

The parent of a pre-kindergarten student who has been participating in the tuition-based pre-kindergarten program and is withdrawing from school should immediately contact the Early Childhood Office at 361-788-9294 to discuss remaining tuition payments and/or a possible refund.

## GLOSSARY

**Accelerated instruction**, also referred to as **supplemental instruction**, is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

Accelerated learning committee (ALC) is a committee that must be established when a student does not perform satisfactorily on the math or reading assessment in grades 3, 5, or 8. The committee, which includes district personnel and the student's parents, develops an educational plan for accelerated instruction to enable the student to perform at the appropriate grade level by the end of the next school year.

**ACT-Aspire** refers to an assessment that took the place of ACT-Plan and is designed as a preparatory and readiness assessment for the ACT. This is usually taken by students in grade 10.

**ACT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**ARD** is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

**Attendance review committee** is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

**CPS** stands for Child Protective Services.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

**DFPS** is the Texas Department of Family Protective Services.

**DPS** stands for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

**EOC (end-of-course) assessments** are end-of-course tests, which are state-mandated, and are part of the STAAR program. Successful performance on EOC assessments is required for graduation. These exams will be given in English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History.

**ESSA** is the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** is the written record of the individualized education program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; accommodations for state or districtwide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

**IGC** is the individual graduation committee, formed in accordance with state law, to determine a student's eligibility to graduate when the student has failed to demonstrate satisfactory performance on no more than two of the required state assessments.

**ISS** refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

**PGP** stands for Personal Graduation Plan, which is required for high school students and for any student in middle school who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**PSAT** is the preparatory and readiness assessment for the SAT. It also serves as the basis for the awarding of the National Merit Scholarships.

**SAT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**SHAC** stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction, along with providing assistance with other student and employee wellness issues.

**Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general education with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state's system of standardized academic achievement assessments.

**STAAR Alternate 2** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student's ARD committee.

**STAAR Spanish** is an alternative state-mandated assessment administered to eligible students for whom a Spanish version of STAAR is the most appropriate measure of their academic progress.

**State-mandated assessments** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Except under limited circumstances, students must pass the STAAR EOC assessments to graduate. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests, if necessary, for graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or district vehicle. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**TAC** stands for the Texas Administrative Code.

**TEA** stands for the Texas Education Agency, which oversees primary and secondary public education in Texas.

**TELPAS** stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten–grade 12.

**TSI assessment** is the Texas Success Initiative assessment designed to measure the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering college-level freshmen students should have if they are to be successful in undergraduate programs in Texas public colleges and universities.

**TXVSN** is the Texas Virtual School Network, which provides online courses for Texas students to supplement the instructional programs of public school districts. Courses are taught by qualified instructors, and courses are equivalent in rigor and scope to a course taught in a traditional classroom setting.

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary nonprofit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Policies and Regulations**

All VISD Policies are available for viewing online at [www.visd.net](http://www.visd.net). The Policy Manual is also available for public inspection during regular business hours in the VISD Office of the Superintendent.

School Board Policies are revised and updated periodically to reflect changes in law, court rulings, and local practices and procedures. In all cases, state and federal laws supersede local policies.

### **LOCAL POLICIES PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION**

CQ(LOCAL) ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT  
[Technology Resources](#)

FFI(LOCAL) FREEDOM FROM BULLYING  
[Student Welfare: Bullying](#)

FNF(LOCAL) STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES  
[Investigations and Searches](#)

FNG(LOCAL) STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES  
[Complaints and Grievances](#)

**Academic Calendar**  
[2022-2023 Academic Calendar](#)

**Standardized Testing Calendar (*subject to change*)**  
[2022-2023 Assessment Calendar](#)

**PARENT COMPLAINT FORM**  
[Form](#)

## **INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

**PARENT GRADEBOOK ESCHOOLPLUS APP**  
<https://www.visd.net/page/parent-gradebook>



*Accounts created for the previous school year are still valid. A new account does not need to be established. Log-in information remains the same as the previous year. The log-in functions become available on the second day of school. You will be prompted to change your password after 364 days, from the date of the last password change.*

## **ESCHOOLPLUS APP**

### **eSchoolPLUS Family App**

Download the new free eSchoolPLUS Family App from the [Apple App Store](#), [Google Play Store](#), or [Amazon App Store](#). For more information, check the eSchoolPLUS Family App User Guide. Login using the same login/password you use for Home Access Center. Our gradebook vendor, SunGard K-12 Education, has communicated an important message regarding an iTunes app that resembles their eSchoolPLUS Family App.



Link to App Store  
for Apple-based  
mobile app



Link to Google Play  
Store for Android-  
based mobile app

## **CHILD NUTRITION TITAN FAMILY PORTAL**

An on-line system known as Titan Family Portal ([www.Family.TitanK12.com](http://www.Family.TitanK12.com)) is available for making deposits. The Titan Family Portal system is NOT operated by VISD and the district does not receive any compensation from Titan Family Portal. The Titan Family Portal system offers a means for parents to monitor the usage patterns and available balances. Parents may also set up notifications at no charge when their child's account balance falls to a specified level.

Students will be allowed to purchase a la carte items at all campuses. Parents may deposit money into their student(s) account(s) via the Titan Family Portal at [www.Family.TitanK12.com](http://www.Family.TitanK12.com) or by sending a check. Cash is accepted at the register. For students paying with cash at the point of service, change due will be credited to their account unless requested. No credit cards are allowed at this time. Funds are deposited into a child's account and withdrawn electronically as the child makes purchases in the cafeteria. The Titan Family Portal website is not sponsored by Victoria ISD and Victoria ISD does not receive any portion of the user fees charged on the site.

Parents are also encouraged to monitor their child's meal account using the Titan Family Portal website. Parents may also set up notifications at no charge when their child's account balance falls to a specified level. When a student's meal account is depleted, the Family Portal will notify the parent or a note will be sent home with your child.

Victoria Independent School District school meal fees are as follows:

For 2022-2023 School Year  
Student Meals- Breakfast and Lunch- Free  
Student After School Meals- Free  
Adults/Guests/Second Breakfast \$4.00  
Adults/Guests/Second Lunch \$5.00

Traditional and a la carte menus are on the VISD website as well as the nutritional analysis of the school breakfast and lunch items.



## **CAMPUS CONTACTS & START/END TIMES**

### **Aloe Elementary**

62 Chaparral, Victoria, TX 77905

Phone: 788-9509

Fax: 788-9662

Kristina Hurley, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

### **Cade Middle School**

611 West Tropical Dr., Victoria, TX

77904 Phone: 788-2840

Fax: 788-2886

Jill Lau, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

### **Career & Technology Institute**

104 Profit Dr., Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9288

Fax: 788-9656

Dena Justice, Principal

School Start/End Time: 7:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

### **Chandler Elementary**

5105 Guy Grant Rd., Victoria, TX 77904

Phone: 788-9587

Fax: 788-9590

Melanie Steed, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

### **Crain Elementary**

30600 2706 N. Azalea, Victoria, TX, 77901

Phone: 573-7453

Fax: 574-3411

Yasmina St. Jean, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

### **Deleon Elementary**

1002 Santa Barbara, Victoria, TX 77904

Phone: 788-9553 Fax: 788-9634

Jennifer McIntyre, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

### **Dudley Elementary**

3307 Callis St., Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9517

Fax: 788-9523

Michelle Sturm, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

### **Early Education Center at F.W. Gross**

1208 S. Navarro Street Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 361- 788-2847

Sharla Williams, Principal

School Start/End Time: 7:45 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.

### **Hopkins Elementary**

110 Hopkins Rd., Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9527

Fax: 788-9635

Leandra Hill, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

### **Howell Middle School**

2502 Fannin, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 578-1561

Fax: 788-9547

Jo Beth Jones, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

### **Juvenile Justice Center**

97 Foster Field Rd., Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 575-0399

Fax: 575-6254

Kristine Martin, Administrator

### **VISD Success Academy**

#### **Primary DAEP**

#### **Secondary DAEP**

3002 E. North, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9650/ 788-9658

Fax: 788-9700/ 788-9665

Tedrick Valentine, Principal

### **Mission Valley Elementary**

12063 FM 236 (UMVR), Victoria, TX 77905

Phone: 788-9514

Fax: 788-9689

Mandi Prichard, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**O'Connor Elementary**

3402 Bobolink, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9572 Fax: 788-9575

Ericka Barr, Principal

School Start/End Time: 7:45 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**Patti Welder Middle School**

1604 E. North, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 575-4553

Fax: 788-9629

Larry Rodriguez, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**Rowland Elementary**

2706 Leary Lane, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9549

Fax: 788-9902

Kimberly Martinez, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**P-TECH**

Healthcare located at Victoria East High School;

Education & Training/Computer Science located at Victoria

West High School

Phone: 788-2802

Fax: 788-9687

Dionne Hughes, Program Administrator

School Start/End Time: Dependent on program

**Schorlemmer Elem.**

2564 Mallette Dr., Victoria, TX 77904

Phone: 788-2860

Fax: 788-9283

Elizabeth Chandler, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**Shields Elementary**

3400 Bluebonnet, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9593

Fax: 788-9691

Kelly Gabrysch, Principal

School Start/End Time: 7:45 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**Smith Elementary**

2901 Erwin, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-9605

Fax: 788-9688

Tiffany Absher, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**STEM Academy Middle School**

1110 Sam Houston, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 578-2711

Fax: 788-9800

Denise Moreno, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**Stroman Middle School**

1110 Sam Houston, Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 578-2711

Fax: 788-9800

Larry Cantu, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**Torres Elementary**

4208 Lone Tree Rd., Victoria, TX 77901

Phone: 788-2850

Fax: 788-9278

Crystal Rice, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**Vickers Elementary**

708 Glasgow, Victoria, TX 77904

Phone: 788-9579

Fax: 788-9663

Troy White, Principal

School Start/End Time: 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**Victoria East HS**

4103 Mockingbird Dr., Victoria, TX 77904

Phone: 788-2820

Fax: 788-2826

Justin Gabrysch, Principal

School Start/End Time: 7:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

**Victoria West HS**

307 West Tropical Drive, Victoria, TX 77904

Phone: 788-2830

Fax: 788-2836

Dr. Tonya Patterson, Principal

School Start/End Time: 7:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

The Victoria Independent School District does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age or any other basis prohibited by law for admission, treatment, or participation in its educational programs, services and activities, or employment.

El distrito escolar independiente de Victoria no discrimina contra ninguna persona por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, género, religión, sexo, orientación sexual, discapacidad, edad o cualquier otra razón prohibida por la ley para la admisión, tratamiento, o la participación en los programas educativos, servicios y actividades, o empleo.